“DOCUMENTED OR NOT”: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF REPRESENTATION OF NATIONAL IMMIGRATION REFORMS IN ASIAN INDIAN ETHNIC NEWSPAPERS

By

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

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This dissertation seeks to understand the representation of national immigration reforms in Asian Indian ethnic newspapers and how the newspapers construct their own community members and other immigrants. The examination of four ethnic newspapers, India Abroad, India Bulletin, India Post and India West identified the presence of three prominent discourse within the published articles. The first, Economic discourse, presented immigration reform as necessary for the economic progress of the United States where the immigrants were explicitly represented in terms of economic value. The second, Humanistic discourse, argued the need for a humane, sympathetic, reform for the immigrants who are vulnerable, helpless and victims of circumstances. The third, the Model Minority discourse, showed how the newspapers constructed the Asian Indian immigrants and the other immigrants in relation to immigration reforms. These discourses interacted with each other to present the imagery of the deserving immigrant.

I first summarize the strategies, arguments, and logics used in the news discourses. Based on the analysis, I emphasize the need for a critical approach to ethnic media study, and I argue that for a group that has been historically ambiguously included in the U.S. national imagery, it is necessary to recognize the constitutive function of context and history in their construction of
citizenship, nationhood and rights. Next, I argue that ethnic media should not be considered simply as alternate to mainstream, instead ethnic media research should focus on the underlying logics that guide ethnic media discourses. Finally, I argue the need for associating ethnic media studies with that of critical intercultural communication theories as it will help realize how non-white immigrant groups participate in actively constructing and reconstructing meanings that are presented to them through competing ideologies.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.................................................................................................................. iii

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ v

Dedication ..................................................................................................................................... x

CHAPTER 1 .................................................................................................................................. 1

INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................................... 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ...................................................................................................... 8

Ethnic media ................................................................................................................................. 8

Logics of Discourse ....................................................................................................................... 21

Asian Indian immigrants .............................................................................................................. 30

Discursive logics of nation, race, and citizenship ...................................................................... 39

  Conceptualization of Nation ..................................................................................................... 40
  Discursive Logics of race ......................................................................................................... 47
  Discursive Logics of citizenship ............................................................................................... 52

Dominant Media representation of immigration ....................................................................... 56

  Border discourses ...................................................................................................................... 57
  Citizenship discourse .............................................................................................................. 60

Discursive construction of Immigrants as threat ..................................................................... 65

  Ambivalence in media discourse .......................................................................................... 67

  Situating the Project and Research Questions ..................................................................... 71

  Outline of the Dissertation ..................................................................................................... 73

CHAPTER 2 .................................................................................................................................. 75

METHODS ................................................................................................................................... 75
Analytical Frameworks ............................................................ 77
An Overview of Critical Discourse Analysis ............................. 79
Data Collection ........................................................................ 88
Sample .................................................................................... 89
Data .......................................................................................... 92
Analysis technique ................................................................. 93
Validity and Reliability ............................................................. 96
Researcher Positionality ......................................................... 97
CHAPTER 3 .............................................................................. 100
DESERVING IMMIGRANTS ....................................................... 100
Economic discourse .................................................................. 101
Humanistic discourse .............................................................. 125
Model minority discourse ....................................................... 148
Conclusion ................................................................................ 171
CHAPTER 4 .............................................................................. 173
IMMIGRATION REFORMS IN EDITORIALS, OPINION COLUMNS AND LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR ....................................................................... 173
Editorials and Opinion Column .............................................. 173
Immigration reform in letters to the editor ............................ 196
Conclusion ................................................................................ 203
CHAPTER 5 .............................................................................. 204
CONCLUSION ....................................................................... 204
Summary of findings- News Articles ...................................... 205
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary of findings- Editorials, Opinion Column and Letters to the Editor</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logics</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Claims</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future research</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post study Self-Reflexivity</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Articles</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Kuhu, my daughter, for her understanding and patience, to my husband, Partha, for his mental, and emotional support and to my mother, Manju, and father, Samiran, for their prayers and love.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As a legal immigrant from India, I believe in the responsibility of individuals to follow the laws of their adopted country. Hardworking, law-abiding immigrants who are providing essential, often back-breaking, services should get work permits. But they shouldn’t protest deportation of gang members or criminals (Vasavada, 2013, February 15).

Everyone, including those without immigration status, U.S. citizenship, or even permanent residency, deserves a fair chance for even a slice of the proverbial American Dream. That dream is out of reach for many immigrants, including South Asians, who are undocumented or whose status is in limbo. The DACA program is a real, tangible, and important step that reopens a path toward that dream and sustains hope for an immigration system that rewards hard work and takes our nation into the future. South Asian Americans need to take that step (Raghunathan, 2015. February 18).

The two statements represent the ongoing debate about immigration, amnesty, and security among South Asian Americans. The first excerpt is taken from a letter to the editor published in a community newspaper, Skagit Valley Herald, in the Pacific Northwest during the 2013 cycle of the national immigration debate. The second excerpt is a more recent opinion column published by a mainstream news medium, NBC news, during the 2014-2015 national immigration debate. The two examples represent two apparently conflicting themes that reveal historically articulated competing logics. The first writer advocates who should be included in the national imagery of the United States on the basis of a particular construction of nationhood and citizenship. She constructs acceptance as contingent on socio-economic contributions and legal terms. Along with specifying the terms of conditional entry the writer also insists that
immigrant groups' adopt a vision of the dominant group's ideal national community. The second opinion argues for the need to provide a fair chance to all immigrants, documented or not, and urges undocumented Asian Indian immigrants to avail themselves of the opportunities that opened up with the passage of President Obama's expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA). The writer contributes to the ongoing national immigration debate by reaffirming America's imagined community as a "nation of immigrants," where acceptance is contingent on hard-work.

The excerpts illustrate the conflicting complexities and controversies surrounding the immigration debate, which specifically revolve around the project of national self-definition that includes the terms and conditions of acceptance. Controversies around immigration often rely on dominant logics, which are the dominant ways or common sense ways of representing citizenship and belonging as contingent on socio-economic materialism. The above examples show that though the two writers were advocating for two different groups of Asian Indians, documented vs. undocumented, and thus differing on the issue of legality, they applied similar dominant logics of inclusion in nationhood through hard work.

As the two examples show, when considering the contemporary debates surrounding immigration, we are immediately confronted with several structural and cultural factors that pose serious implications for immigrant inclusion in the national imagery. The national immigration debate in the United States centers around undocumented Mexican immigrants who are excluded based on the logics of race, nation, and citizenship (Ono & Sloop, 2002). Contrarily, based on the logics of ambiguous racial coding and model minority, Asian Indian immigrants have historically been imagined both as fitting and not fitting in the U.S. national imagery. The dominant logics being presented by mainstream media focus only on Mexican migration. This
excludes many other voices which participate in the immigration debate and thereby obscures the logics that are applied by others in the debate. In particular, how non-dominant communities represent immigration and immigrant from different groups, whom they envision as deserving of U.S. citizenship rights, and if and how they advocate for those rights, and how they imagine the U.S. national community.

The past two decades have witnessed an overwhelming proliferation of ethnic media, both in terms of numbers of media outlets and a variety of media forms (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011). Central to minorities' and immigrants' lives, ethnic media have existed for more than a century, and have performed multiple functions such as serving cultural, political, economic and everyday needs or aiding in their adaptation process (Adoni, Caspi & Cohen, 2006; Arnold & Schneider, 2007; Black & Lethiener, 1988; Bartner & Herczeg, 2013; Johnson, 2000, 2010). Critical media scholars note that ethnic media play a central role in the everyday practices that create and shape/reshape ethnic identity, culture and understanding of race (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009). Scholars note that media representations are sites where forms of domination are legitimated. Such discursive representations become crucial as they dominate the negotiation of tensions and struggles over changing relations (Fairclough, 2009; van Dijk, 1991). With their complex and dynamic nature, scholars show that ethnic media sometimes reproduce dominant ideologies and sometimes challenge them. Ono and Sloop points out, the position of any discourse may change. Thus ethnic media discourses at times can be more resistant than complicit and at times more complicit than resistant to dominant ideas and dominant logics. This implies that for a given topic (immigration in this case) ethnic media discourse can also support dominant logics even if disputing the outcome. Contemporary news media portray immigrants through nativistic discourses as economic commodities, criminals, invaders, animals, or carriers
Media representations are also central to the negotiation of citizenship in the balance of powers between the economic, social, and political spheres (Somers, 2008). This is because media representations shape, constitute and work as important means for the accumulation of political capital and they also play a part in the erasure of certain minorities from mainstream society (Amaya, 2013). Mainstream media are structured as a system whereby immigrant and minority voices can mostly be heard in ethnic media (Amaya, 2013). Coverage of the immigration reform debate in Asian Indian ethnic newspapers is particularly useful as it would reveal the different interests and logics that are applied by members of a group that has been historically ambiguously included in the U.S. national imagery.

I utilize Ono and Sloop’s (2002) concepts of civic, vernacular, dominant, and outlaw discourses to help understand how discourses work within and reinforce dominant logics of what makes common sense and how they challenge those logics. Civic versus vernacular discourse distinguishes between the "target and potential audience of a given media text" (Ono & Sloop, 2002, p. 12) and dominant versus outlaw discourse differentiates the "logics of judgment," noting what is right or wrong. These concepts can effectively describe and critique the position of a discourse in relationship to other discourses (in terms of dominant ideologies).

Investigating immigration discourses can help identify the underlying logics and ideologies that are used to construct and position immigrants in relation to the nation. From the inception of the U.S., the discursive constitution of immigration has contributed to the development of particular policies, shaped the opportunities and constraints that immigrants continue to face (Waisenen, 2012). In the late twentieth century, a conservative story of increased immigration reform dominated public discourse (Demo, 2004). The Immigration Act
of 1990 and Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 restricted immigration into the U.S, far beyond previous periods (Varma, 2004), and many conservative movements advanced bills like California's Proposition 187 in 1994, seeking to stop undocumented migrants from getting education, health, and welfare benefits (Ono & Sloop, 2002). Strict anti-immigration measures have been heightened in the post-9/11 period, and controversial policies continue to develop, such as Arizona's strict immigration law requiring aliens to possess registration documents at all times (Archibold, 2010; Chin, Hessick, & Miller, 2012). The immigration scholarship reveals there are curious tensions within the public discourse that challenge simple understandings of how these discursive and material borders have been formed. In the last few decades, scholars have observed the existence of narratives that show support, indifference, and opposition to immigration (see Ono & Sloop, 2002). Contrary to what might be expected, many conservative think-tanks and elites opposed policies like Proposition 187 (Diamond, 1996). With the ongoing national debate on immigration reforms understanding media representation of immigration in ethnic media is particularly important as they often raise awareness about issues not attended in mainstream media, such as immigration reform and how it affects immigrants, citizenship rights, and roles of immigrants in the nation's socio-economic system etc. (Matsaganis et al., 2011). Further, the absence of representation of other immigrant groups in mainstream media raises questions about how immigration reforms are discursively covered in ethnic media: What arguments are presented in support or against the reforms? How do they define their ethnic group and how do they portray their group in relation to the reforms? Which other ethnic groups are represented in such discourse? Who are presented as the beneficiary of the reforms? How are the other ethnic groups constructed in relation to immigration reforms? Who are presented positively and who are presented in negative terms.
How do they define illegality? Who are represented as illegal in such discourse? To this end, this project will analyze how national immigration reform is contextualized in Asian Indian ethnic media.

Within the broader image of national identity, Asian Indians present a special case. Though Asian Indian immigration in the U.S. can be traced back to as early as the late 1800s, multiple immigration reforms in the last fifty years have contributed to large migration of Asian Indians. However, Asian Indians are an underrepresented group within general immigration research, with only a few studies that have portrayed the lived experiences of this diverse group of immigrants (Das Gupta, 2006; Prashad, 2000; Rudrappa, 2004; Saran, 1985). The post-1965 immigrants were highly skilled educated professional and were portrayed as "model minority" (Abraham, 2002; Leonard-Spark & Saran, 1980). Such discourses try to incorporate Asian Indians into the American parable of hard work and perseverance while other racial minorities are rebuked for not being like the Asian Indians (Das Gupta, 2006). Segments of the immigrant group embraced, promoted and sustained this image in order to create and establish their positionality in the U.S. social hierarchy. However, since the late 1980s with the increasing diversity within the community, many Asian Indian immigrants have realized that the model minority politics were inadequate to redress problems of violence, racism, and poverty. This gave rise to new forms of immigrant advocacy, by pursuing rights that are not exclusively grounded on national membership, and by making claims as migrants rather than as prospective citizens (Das Gupta, 2006). Das Gupta (2006) notes the internal politics within the community where some construct themselves as the problem-free monolithic group held together by a common culture, identity and political goals, who uphold the existing social order both in their adopted and home country. She names these group place-takers. Others, whom she names
space-makers, create alternate structures for collective action to intervene in the social hierarchies and to voice opposition against "class exploitation, racism, narrow nationalism...within and outside their communities" (Das Gupta, 2006, p. 56). Given the mainstream ambiguity surrounding the community, ideological diversity among the immigrant community, and the differential politics within the community this project examines what logics of discourse predominate and compete in the representation of the U.S. national immigration debate in Asian Indian ethnic newspapers. The study inquires how the different constituents (such as community elites and other groups) are positioned in relation to the immigration reforms and how other immigrants and minorities are constructed as the national immigration reforms are recontextualized in Asian Indian ethnic media.

This project will advance Ono and Sloop's (2002) framework by applying it to critically understand how ethnic media discourses work, reinforce and potentially challenge dominant logics of race, nation, and citizenship. As previously stated this framework would be particularly helpful as it would help comprehend the dynamic and shifting relations among discourses, and how the position of any discourse is in flux. This project will examine four English language Asian Indian newspapers published in the U.S., to gain insight into the logics used by the immigrants to represent the national immigration debate. I chose to analyze newspapers because for ethnic communities' news discourse is often the main source of knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies for both the elite and the common members of the communities (Matsaganis, Katz & Ball- Rokeach, 2011). Also as van Dijk (1988a) argues critical examination of newspaper language is particularly crucial as often the logics are not obvious, instead are concealed in the discursive construction of the linguistic forms. For the analysis of ethnic newspapers, I choose
English language newspapers because English is the primary language of communication among
the estimated 2.6 million Asian Indians in the USA (Census, 2010).

Also according to media consumer research Asian Indians extensively use ethnic print media in
order to gain information about the community and relevant to the community (Chacko, 2009;
Viswanath & Arora, 1999). Discourses are always political as they concern social goods and
power, to this end this study will investigate whether the Asian Indian newspaper discourse
articulates a dominant discourse and how.

In the following sections, I will first discuss ethnic media, next, the logics of discourses,
followed by a discussion of Asian Indian immigrants. Next, I will discuss the theories of the
nation, race, and citizenship. Finally, I will discuss media representation of immigrants that
inform my dissertation and situate the project within the theoretical perspectives.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, first I give an overview of my theoretical framework. My framework
consists of critical approaches to ethnic media and the conceptual framework of dominant,
outlaw, civic and vernacular discourses and by combining them I aim to advance both theoretical
perspectives. Then I will discuss the Asian Indian immigrants in the U.S. Finally, I discuss the
theories of the nation, race, and citizenship and situate the project within the theoretical
perspectives.

Ethnic media

The earliest ethnic medium in the U.S., the Black Press, dates back to around early 1800s
(Matsaganis, Katz & Ball- Rokeach, 2011). It began in response to events and social conditions
(slavery and segregation) that the African American communities experienced. Recent studies
show a steady growth of ethnic media, such that nearly 60 million Americans (consisting of
African, Latino, and Asian) get their news and other information primarily from ethnic sources such as newspapers, television, radio, Web sites (Johnson, 2010; Matsaganis et al., 2011). The growth of ethnic media in the U.S. and elsewhere can be credited to multiple factors such as fast increase in ethnic audience (Jeffres, 2000; Johnson, 2010; Viswanath & Arora, 2000), increasing dissatisfaction with mainstream media (Deuze, 2006), and advances in technologies like introduction of new forms of media and news distribution system (Jeffres, 2000; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). Matsaganis et al. (2011) note that ethnic media are particularly important as they raise consciousness about issues not addressed in mainstream media, such as immigration reform and how it effects immigrants, citizenship rights, roles of immigrants in the nation's socio-economic system, etc. Studies show mainstream media's ambivalence and continued negative imagery of immigrants. As the immigration debate continues, a question arises whether ethnic newspapers reproduce mainstream discourses of immigration or articulate alternative and opposing points of view. The following section will detail the different conceptions of ethnic media, specify the different ethnic media research and list the difference between ethnic and mainstream media.

**Defining ethnic media**

The rise in ethnic media has opened up a new area of study in communication scholarship. However, a major problem with studying ethnic media is the complexity of defining it. Studies show that ethnic media have been defined based on the different media forms such as ethnic newspapers, broadcast stations (Daniels, 2006; Felix et al., 2008; Johnson, 2010; Lee, 2004); affinity groups such as the Black press, the Spanish language press, the Native American media, the Chinese language press (Daniels, 2006; Guzman, 2006; Moran, 2006; Shi, 2009; Weill & Castanada; 2004); and/or geographic communities (Ling & Song; 2006; Mayer, 2001).
Studies that define ethnic media through different forms of media and/or through different group based distinctions show how ethnic newspapers (Johnson, 2010), radio broadcast stations (Felix et al., 2006) and internet or satellite broadcast (Daniel, 2006; Lee, 2004) contribute to the reinforcement of a community's ethnic identity and to the level of their national integration. Other studies that define ethnic media in terms of geographic locations argue that ethnic media are sites for immigrants to define themselves within the structural constraints of race and class, and sites that connect them both to their country of origin and their local neighborhood (Mayer, 2001; Ling & Song, 2006).

A few studies define ethnic media based on language as central to media use (Adoni, Caspi & Cohen, 2006; Guittierrez, 1977). Critiques argue that the use of language to define ethnic media cannot be applied to all ethnic media, such as the Black press (Johnson, 2010; Matsaganis et al., 2011). Further, studies show that certain ethnic newspapers never use their original language as it is either lost (Daniels, 2006) or because the cultural group speaks different languages, such as Europe's cultural group Roma (Gross, 2006). Apart from language ethnic media have also been defined based on ownership and funding (Lin & Kim, 2011; Ojo, 2006). However, ethnic programs might not be necessarily produced or funded by ethnic groups only; such as mainstream media like British Broadcasting Corporation produces ethnic programs (Cottle, 2000; Johnson, 2010).

Further, a few studies have defined ethnic media only as media for immigrants and their descendants thereby ignoring indigenous cultural groups' media, such as the Native American Press (Georgiou, 2006; Waters & Ueda, 2006). These studies have decreased the clarity of the term ethnic media through their interchangeable use of "minority media" and "ethnic media" labels. Additionally, globalization and the advent of new technologies have further complicated
the definition of ethnic media because ethnic diasporas can now use media from their original homeland through internet or satellite (which were formerly called international media) in ways similar to the use of ethnic media produced by the community in the host nation (Georgiou, 2001; Lee, 2004; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). Though traditional research on ethnic media considered such media as foreign media, such media can no longer be restricted within the borders of a nation-state (Johnson, 2010; Shi, 2009). This is so because consumers may not distinguish between an ethnic magazine (e.g. Spanish) imported from their homeland (by a local bookstore) and an ethnic magazine (Spanish) published in their host country. In the networked societies geo-ethnic communities are not the only ethnic communities. Therefore, ethnic media definitions might overlap with those of international media, and can also be similar to the definition of community media, indigenous media, and (culture-specific) media like the Black press or the Chinese-American media (Johnson, 2010; Matsaganis, et al., 2011; Shi, 2009).

Matsaganis, Katz, and Ball-Rokeach (2011) define ethnic media as media "produced by and for immigrants, racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, as well as indigenous populations living across different countries" (p. 6). This definition surpasses restrictions based on language, geographic location, size, ownership etc. that must be considered while defining ethnic media. This study will follow this definition and use the term ethnic media to describe Asian Indian newspapers that serve the Asian Indian ethnic and immigrant communities here in the U.S. The term ethnic media applies because the Asian Indian newspapers (or some of them) are not confined to a geographical area. For example, the newsweekly India Abroad though centered in the New York City metro area is published and distributed throughout the United States and Canada. India Abroad, founded in 1970 by Indian American Gopal Raju, is the first Asian Indian newspaper published in the U.S. It is targeted specifically to serve the growing Asian Indian
communities. The agenda of this weekly newspaper is to focus on news about the Asian Indian communities in the United States, on issues and problems unique to the communities, and on news from India (Shah & Thornton, 2004). However, in 2001 Gopal Raju sold the weekly newspaper to Rediff.com an Indian news, information, entertainment and shopping web portal, headquartered in Mumbai. At present, there are many Asian Indian media outlets, which include print and other forms of media such as ethnic radio and television. However, this study will only focus on ethnic media newspapers that are published in the U.S. The next section will elaborate on the difference between ethnic media and mainstream media.

**Ethnic media versus mainstream media**

Media scholars contend that mainstream media are media produced by and for the mainstream society, where mainstream society is conceived as the socio-economic majority (Arnold & Schneider, 2007; Molina Guzman, 2006; Matsaganis et al., 2011). However, it must be noted that mainstream does not only include the ethnic majority. The mainstream has broader boundaries, which expand over time (Matsaganis et al., 2011). Ethnic media are conceived as produced by and for immigrants, racial, ethnic and linguistic minorities and indigenous populations (Matsaganis et al., 2011; Shi, 2009). A key difference between mainstream media and ethnic media is the difference in their potential influence on integration, where mainstream media (in the host society) have a probable influence on most of the majority and minorities. However, ethnic media often time serve only one ethnic group and act as the advocate for the community (Arnold & Schneider, 2007; Matsaganis et al., 2011).

Mainstream media often function as an advocate of the dominant power structure, where they are less sensitive to the constant negotiation of ethnic identity, culture and perceptions of race (Donohue et al., 1995; Matsaganis et al., 2011). In general, an ethnic group is possibly more
susceptible to discrimination from other groups, specifically if they are different from the mainstream. In the case of social and political issues, ethnic media perform an important role in constructing their readers’ perception and knowledge of race and ethnicity. This is because in determining social constructs like borders, immigration, etc., ethnic media have the potential to engage in an oppositional relationship with mainstream media reports, and thereby providing alternate narratives. Therefore, in order to protect the community, it serves, an ethnic news medium will possibly function as a community advocate against an external threat (Molina Guzman, 2006; Viswanath & Arora, 2000).

Media scholars assert that news media promote racial ideology (Matsaganis et al., 2011; Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009). Scholars argue that both mainstream and ethnic media reinforce racial ideologies (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009). However, mainstream news media work to enhance social control, and in the case of a social conflict, they perform an essential ideological function by reifying racial hegemony through selective reporting. On the other hand, although the ethnic press engages with the prevailing racial hegemony, it will more likely reveal a different set of concerns, values, and assumptions about the social world that might challenge racial hegemony (Matsaganis, et al., 2011).

Scholars note that the present landscape of ethnic media is vibrant and complicated, therefore ethnic media should not be simply considered as the ‘Other’ of mainstream media (Matsaganis et al., 2011; Shi, 2009). This is because ethnic media have their own historical differences, self-identity, and different degrees of engagement with the mainstream. Ethnic media scholars argue that though they might function against mainstream injustice and advocate for minority rights in certain cases they may adopt dominant ideologies in order to safeguard the positionality of their ethnic group within the mainstream framework (Lin & Song, 2006; Molina
Guzman, 2006; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). In order to understand the competing discourses that constitute immigration and immigrants in ethnic media, it is necessary to investigate the underlying logics and ideologies that shape such discourses. The next section will expand on ethnic media research.

**Ethnic media research**

Research on ethnic media addresses their different roles in the daily lives of immigrants, ethnic minorities, and the greater society. Extant scholarship assumes that ethnic media are produced by ethnic communities in the host country to serve cultural, political, economic and everyday needs and produces and transforms identity, culture and perception of race (Hayes, 2006; Jeffres, 1999; Johnson, 2000; Matsaganis, Katz & Ball-Rokeach, 2011; Ojo, 2006; Park, 1970; Viswanath & Arora, 2000).

A few studies demonstrated that ethnic media aid in immigrant assimilation and integration in the host country (Adoni, Caspi & Cohen, 2006; Arnold & Schneider, 2007; Black & Lethiener, 1988; Bartner & Herczeg, 2013; Johnson, 2000, 2010). These studies show that ethnic media act as educators that help newcomers get familiarize to their new community and its resources, while also teaching more subtle rules about correct behavior and values of the new society. Ethnic media also help maintain cultural identity, invoke cultural pride, provide a link to home, and provide a platform for collective communication and representation of interest. They provide the basis for constituting a figurative community for members of an ethnic group at the national level, thereby surpassing local geographic boundaries, while supporting the integration of the ethnic group on a local level by giving information on local policies, events, etc. Consequently, ethnic media are crucial for developing and sustaining cultural identity as well as ethnic group agendas. Other scholars also point out that ethnic media play dual role
strengthening both acculturation and stronger ethnic identification across time (Caspi, Adoni, Cohen & Elias, 2002; Croucher, Oommen, Steele, 2009; Jeffers, 2006). However, scholars note that as ethnic media are primarily conceptualized to have the capacity to influence one particular ethnic group this has raised fears of ethnic media promoting segregation of ethnic groups (Arnold & Schneider, 2007; Becker, 1996; Hargreaves & Mahdjoub, 1997). Such that it leads to the formation of ethnic parallel or resistant groups or persistent engagement of ethnic minorities in intra-ethnic relations, while avoiding inter-ethnic communication (Becker, 1996; Esser, 2000).

In the emerging field of ethnic media research, Asian Indian ethnic media is underrepresented in spite of its growth in the last few decades. Similar to other ethnic media scholarship (Arnold & Schneider, 2007; Black & Lethiener, 1988; Bartner & Herczeg, 2013; Johnson, 2000, 2010), existing studies on Asian Indian ethnic media also demonstrated that the media are focused on aiding the community in its assimilative and integrative pursuit and in maintaining cultural identity (Shah & Thornton, 2004; Viswanath & Arora, 2000).

Another role of ethnic media is a watchdog against mainstream injustice and advocate for minority rights in the U.S. (Hindman, 1998; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). Scholars note that ethnic media often struggle between advocacy and mainstream journalism, where advocacy lets the community define for itself what news is and how it should be covered, while mainstream journalism prompts detachment, objectivity, follows specific methods, and holds certain values. Scholars demonstrate that ethnic media provide orientation for migrants in their host country and also set the news agenda for an ethnic audience (Viswanath & Arora, 2000). Particularly they are often seen as ‘alternative’ to mainstream media and as having the power to organize collective actions among minority people (Hindman, 1998; Lin & Song, 2006; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). Viswanath and Arora (2000) argue that though the ethnic press does cover conflicts that would
interest readers, it pays relatively less attention to issues that would threaten the perception of their community in the host country. Therefore, on issues such as immigration, it is most likely that the role of a watchdog is an important function for the immigrant press (Ling & Song, 2006; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). For example, Asian Indian ethnic media studies describe how ethnic media practice strategic coverage based on fear of social or political consequences (Shah & Thornton, 2004; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). In their study on Asian Indian ethnic media, Viswanath and Arora (2000) describe the coverage strategy of Asian Indian ethnic press. The authors described that the ethnic press has significant coverage of imminent immigration laws only when they see that the prospective laws would affect the community in some ways. However, in general, Asian Indian ethnic press pays little attention to other issues such as civil rights presumably because such issues are not important to the community. Similarly, coverage of other issues like social welfare was also dependent on the extent to which the issue affects the community members. The authors contend that Asian Indian ethnic media play double role of social control and reinforcement of ethnic identity, by giving high attention to covering issues such as immigration that would be of interest to their readers but at the same time avoiding issues or paying less attention to the coverage of issues that may threaten the community's stability. Shah and Thornton (2004) demonstrate the ambiguity in the coverage strategy of Asian Indian ethnic media. In their investigation of the role of news in racial formation, they show that Asian Indian newspapers are often advocates for the positions of their own group in the racial hierarchy. Asian Indian newspapers tend to portray Blacks as threatening to the community members or their property. While on the other hand they also show the shared bonds between their community, Blacks, and other minorities by portraying them all as victims of racial discrimination. The authors note that Asian Indian press establishes their community's position
by describing their relation (equivalence or difference) with others communities. Such ties are important to the economic and social revival of the community, and they use it while asserting self-interest, recognizing common interests with other communities of color, exposing White privilege and power or challenging racial hierarchy.

Additionally, studies have shown that ethnic media perform other important roles such as, mobilize ethnic communities and indicate large social change (Baum, 2006; Gonzalez, 2006; Matsaganis et al., 2011). Studies have shown that ethnic media provide its audience an understanding of the current relationship between the ethnic community and the greater society (Black & Lethiener, 1988; Felix et al., 2008; Gandy, 2000; Molina Guzman, 2006; Ojo, 2006). This is because ethnic media not only show the relationship between the ethnic community and the mainstream society but also act as the focal point "for the development of a local consensus and a means of expression of the community’s demands on the wider host community" (Gandy, 2000, p. 45). Also, they can act as indicators of social change by providing its audience insights into changes that are taking place around them (Baum, 2006; Gonzalez, 2006).

Scholars note that the assumption that ethnic media are produced by ethnic communities in the host country to serve the community's everyday needs (cultural, political, economic) is partly true because at the present many ethnic outlets are transnationalized (Fontaine, 2012; Han, 2013; Kim, 2011; Shi, 2009). The argument that ethnic media aid in immigrant assimilation and acculturation process assumes that an ethnic community is homogeneous and ignores the presence of social differences (such as class, gender, income, education, etc.). These differences are crucial as these attributes impact how meanings are interpreted and woven into daily lives of a community. Therefore, studies should address whether ethnic media discourses enable or disable cultural politics in the audience's everyday context. With the steady rise in ethnic media
in recent times, it is time to realize that understanding only mainstream media representations are not sufficient. As ethnic media play a significant role in the daily lives of a community it is necessary to understand representation in ethnic media particularly focusing on the relationship between ethnic media and mainstream ideologies and logics. Given the observed characteristic in this sparsely researched area, investigating Asian Indian ethnic press becomes vital in order to understand the logics used by ambiguously coded groups to construct immigration, citizenship and belonging.

**Critical ethnic media research**

Ethnic media studies have neglected to understand the relationship between power structures and ethnic media content. In her analyses of different genres of ethnic media research Johnson (2010) argues that such an approach is required as ethnic media are conceived to influence knowledge, perceptions, and behavior. Critical research on ethnic media addresses this gap by examining the production of meanings in ethnic media in relation to mainstream media, and conceiving ethnic media as an ideological apparatus (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2005, 2009). Critical scholars posit that ethnic media not only provide a space for political dialogue, but also perform a central role in defining parameters of citizenship, and rights (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009; also see Riggins, 1992). Further, such studies claim that ethnic media possess the potential to engage its audience in a dialogue on issues of immigration, citizenship, rights, and to adopt immigrants into citizens' or otherwise restrain them as aliens. Ethnic media thereby play an important role in shaping the socially constructed borders of the imagined community (Anderson, 1991), and in identifying who is included and excluded in the imagined community. Molina Guzman notes that the "elasticity and limitations" (p. 283) of the imagined community is shaped by the mainstream ideology of universality and by dominant definition of citizenship.
Such ideologies construct ethnic groups as homogeneous by suppressing differences and define citizenship as contingent on lawfulness, willingness to assimilate and economic contribution without expecting any return. For ethnic media circulation of cultural meaning contributes to the social construction of knowledge, as they either unify citizens (under the imagined community of the nation-state), and describe immigrants as citizens or aliens, or challenge national boundaries and identity (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009). Therefore, scholars argue the need to consider how ethnic media are involved in the production of culture and ideology as they are not only connected to the audience they serve but also because their representation would reflect their own identity politics.

Critical media scholars emphasize the importance of understanding how ethnic media contribute to cultural understanding and knowledge making (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009). In her study of Latino media, Molina Guzman (2006) argues that similar to mainstream media, ethnic media engage in “ideological construction of reality” (p. 282). She demonstrates how the Spanish-language newspaper in Miami asserts the Cuban community’s collective identity while reifying the dominant perception of the community as law-abiding in order to establish a difference from other ethnic and racial groups. She argues that such assertion and reification of dominant imagery are strategies that are used to affirm their community’s position within the imagined nation. Further, she notes that such strategies also reshape the socially constructed borders that include some while excluding other from the American imagery (Molina Guzman, 2006).

In a critical study of Chinese ethnic media Shi (2009) notes that though ethnic media are not part of mainstream ideological apparatus, they still subject their readers to mainstream racial ideology through their promotion of assimilation. In the examination of the role of Chinese
language newspapers in the lives of Chinese working class immigrant women, she found nonconforming views and mobilizing power of the newspapers, on issues of race, ethnicity, and racism. However, she notes that while they might have dissenting views, such as against racial injustice, they fail to challenge the actual logic of racial hierarchy as these newspapers always treat facilitation of assimilation as their primary goal. Scholars note that the current landscape of ethnic media is very complex and dynamic, therefore treating ethnic media simply as the ‘other’ of mainstream media limits understanding (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009). To get a comprehensive understanding of the role of ethnic media in immigrant’s lives, it is necessary to study on a micro, cultural level thereby identify the meaning, reasoning, and arguments that guide ethnic media discourse.

Ethnic media research has neglected understanding the underlying logics that guide ethnic media discourses. This gap can be effectively addressed by using Ono and Sloop's framework of "logics of discourse." In order to critically understand how national immigration reform debate is recontextualized in Asian Indian ethnic media, I will engage Ono and Sloop's framework of 'logics of discourse,' that addresses differences between discourses in terms of their use of dominant vs. outlaw and civic and vernacular logics. This perspective directs attention to arguments, meanings, and reasoning; what is presented as common sense and how common sense might be challenged. This framework will enable a more nuanced understanding of how ethnic media negotiate cultural logics of citizenship, nationhood, and rights and thus how they might reproduce challenge or negotiate dominant representations of immigrants and the immigration reform debate. The next section will detail Ono & Sloop's framework of "logics of discourse."
Logics of Discourse

Drawing on the poststructural assumption that knowledge can only be understood through discourse, Ono and Sloop (2002) proposed a framework that "engages and utilizes meanings, logics and arguments from multiple areas of discussion" (p. 12) to lay out some relational vectors of differences among discourses. The framework helps to understand how discourses work within and reinforce dominant logics of what makes common sense and how they challenge those logics. The authors specify that this framework not only details each type of discourse but also shows how they conceptually intersect. The purpose is not to simply categorize a discourse but instead to understand the position of a discourse in relationship to other discourses in terms of the dominant ideologies and social hierarchy. The authors note that these categories should be perceived as "tools of criticism" (p. 12) rather than as objective or unchangeable categories. The authors assert that though the grid-like nature of the categories of discourse seems rigid, the "logics of discourse" are a conceptual guide and not actual existing material divisions. They suggest that the intersections form a "grid of intelligibility" (p. 12) that helps to judge the discourses that should be investigated, how to understand them and also helps decide the goals of investigations. Thus the concepts are not means of categorization but rather of understanding the dynamic and shifting relations among discourses. The framework provides the concept of "logics of discourse" as a way to analyze the relationship among discourses.

Ono and Sloop's (2002) framework helps view discourses in a relational way based on who are the producer of the discourses, and whether they reinforce or challenge dominant cultural logics. Ono and Sloop (2002) define logics of discourse as the meanings, reasoning, and arguments that guide discourses. The logics of discourse help to distinguish whether two discourses reify the same cultural logics and goals or challenges dominant ideology. In their
framework the authors make two distinctions to understand discourses, the first distinction
distinguishes between the target and the potential audience of a specific media text and the
second distinction is based on the logics of judgment used in a discussion. The two distinctions
are detailed below.

The first distinction lays out the difference between civic versus vernacular discourse.
This distinction recognizes the difference between the intended and the prospective audience of a
given media text. Ono and Sloop (2002) explain that civic discourses are intended to provide
information, such as entertainment, persuasion, etc., for a sizable population irrespective of the
real usage patterns. A civic discourse though considered universal by the dominant group, all
members of the society do not have equal power to participate in such discourse. It is marked as
civic as it is the common form of communication that is accessible to people. Civic discourse
comprises any sources that circulate information to consumers, such as newspapers, magazines,
radio and television shows, etc. The authors assert that to a certain degree civic discourses are
invisible. Vernacular discourses materialize from self-identified smaller marginalized
communities that exist within the large civic community. Vernacular discourses are both
everyday conversations and mediated communications that provide information to more specific
demographic groups.

The second distinction is based on the logics of judgment used within a discourse and
distinguishes between dominant discourse and outlaw discourse. Dominant discourses are the
meanings and knowledge that function within "the commonly accepted (and institutionally
supported) understanding of what is just, good or bad" (Ono and Sloop, 2002, p. 14). Dominant
discourses are disseminated in media, specifically those that fit with the ideologies of
"governmental" discourses and are subtly approved by the government. They operate through
"logic of judgment" or decision making that is reliant on the general cultural ideology. Additionally, if there are any differences of knowledge or understanding, they are often separated out based on positions, implications, and logics of the dominant discourse. Thus, dominant discourses spread through educational, entertainment and political institutions by establishing itself as common sense, "both at a civic and at the level of the individual" (p. 14). Dominant discourse mostly becomes dominant civic discourse because it is widely circulated and culturally accepted. On the other hand, the outlaw discourse is incongruent with the logic of dominant discourse. However, outlaw discourses are not a simple reversal of dominant discourse that is they do not counter dominant positions; instead, they are discourses that are outside or do not follow dominant logics. Ono and Sloop (2002) explain that outlaw discourses "work on the basis of differend rather than litigation" (p. 139). To illustrate outlaw discourse, Ono and Sloop borrow from Lyotard's notion of the differend, which means a conflict that cannot be fairly resolved due to the lack of a judgment that can be applied to both arguments. The differend depends on the contingency of all judgments and the incompatibilities of various logics are given preference over the validity of a single claim. Ono and Sloop (2002) argue that particular outlaw logic is championed by presenting it as "universally valid" (p. 141). They also contend that dominant logics (which are already prevalent) act as precedence and hence, the outlaw logics attempt to challenge those dominant ones. Moreover, outlaw logics act as an improvement on current logic assuming outlaw discourse as the truth. Therefore, Ono and Sloop (2002) argue that the role of outlaw discourse is to invoke questions and encourage an alternative way of thinking about justice. The authors claim that along with dominant discourse, the outlaw discourse occupies a crucial position in "constructing the public" by residing outside the domain of dominant discourse and challenging the way dominant ideas shape thinking and acting. Hence,
outlaw discourse carries with it the potential to bring about substantive change in the alternative ways of thinking and acting.

As previously noted, these classifications of discourse (dominant, outlaw, civic, and vernacular) are necessarily fluid. An outlaw discourse could also be civic discourse when it is viewed as universal or it can remain outlaw vernacular if it does not gain universal interest. Any discourse that is outlaw civic does not remain as such for long. Ono and Sloop (2002) argue that there are two possibilities with an outlaw civic discourse. First, the outlaw discourse can move out of the localized context, become part of the general culture, and eventually become popular, thereby eventually bring social change. It can also become a part of the dominant discourse and lose its resistant potential to the prevalent discourse. On the other hand, the outlaw discourse can also continue to remain marginalized without assimilating within the dominant discourse. In either case, by analyzing the outlaw discourse, scholars identify the logics that are in opposition with the logics of dominant discourses. Ono and Sloop (2002) explain, "outlaw logic becomes civic through the process by which they either are rejected and hence, remain an outlaw logic, or become ideologically disciplined so that they no longer challenge dominant logic and hence become dominant" (p. 22) and eventually widely accepted. In doing so, such discourses also bring in changes in the previous dominant discourse and "redefine what is dominant" (p. 22). Therefore, outlaw discourse has the potential to bring in slow, discursive change.

Ono and Sloop (2002) demonstrate the concept of logics of discourse in their study on California Proposition 187, which examine and analyze media representations of the rhetoric of immigration in the U.S. The authors study the discourse surrounding the Proposition 187, specifically the public discussion about immigration and U.S. citizenship and the consequent role of rhetoric in shaping borders, constructing immigrant identities and international relationships.
The authors describe that the dominant discourse that emerges not only distinguishes between illegal immigrants, legal immigrants, and citizens; it also portrays them in such a manner that puts material and social constraints on immigrants and their claims to equality. The authors further argue that the dominant discourses construct ambivalent attitudes concerning immigrants along racial and gendered lines. The dominant discourse on immigration in mainstream news media reflects the "hegemonic" or dominant ideological themes. According to Ono and Sloop (2002), logics of discourse are the ideologies that influence argument in discourse. By identifying the logics of discourse Ono and Sloop found that both pro and anti-proposition debates were reifying the same dominant ideology.

A few other studies have also utilized Ono and Sloop's theoretical framework to identify the different logics that are used to construct discourses, and how such logics either blend in seamlessly with the prevailing modes of thought or remain outside the realm of mainstream thinking and logics. A few studies show how vernacular discourses construct and sustain marginalized communities, or how vernacular discourses function as confirmatory (does not function solely to counter dominant ideologies), conveying a sense of community whose members use hegemonic discourse to construct subjectivities (Calafell & Delgado, 2004; Gu & Lee, 2013; Hess, 2009, 2010). A few other studies have presented the functioning of outlaw discourses that not only celebrates margins and validates voices of creative imaginations but can also change the way a normative judgment is made (Cisneros, 2012; ValSlette & Boyd, 2011; Waisenen, 2012). The usage of Ono and Sloop's framework is briefly explicated below.

In their exploration of visual and discursive elements of a published collection of photographic images of Latina/o life Calafell and Delgado (2004) utilize Ono and Sloop's framework to understand Latina/o vernacular discourse. The authors in their analysis found the
logics used by a publication representing Latina/o life in the U.S. resisted at various levels the prevailing ideology of race and nation. However, while constructing a pan-Latina/o representation the discourse failed to challenge strategic essentialism. Other scholars have extended Ono and Sloop's theoretical approach, an approach originally theorized within print media, to the digital sphere (Gu & Lee, 2013; Hess, 2009, 2010). Utilizing the context of new media such as YouTube, Hess (2009, 2010) contends that though the Internet has been hailed as a likely destination for discovering resistant voices the framework shows that dialectical vernacular voices speak both from institutional and vernacular positions, where both videographer and news network share the mainstream media logic of infotainment. Similarly, Gu and Lee (2013) apply Ono and Sloop's framework to understand how vernacular discourse interacts with mainstream discourse via its content. They argue that the content of vernacular discourse is hybrid as the line between vernacular and mainstream content is always fluid. They utilize the concept of cultural syncretism (which suggests the simultaneous occurrence of a creation of vernacular rhetoric and contestation of mainstream discourse) and the concept of pastiche (which suggests vernacular discourse use mainstream language) to examine the interaction in the context of new media. They extend Ono and Sloop's framework by proposing the synthesized concept of hybrid vernacular discourse.

A few other studies have portrayed the working of outlaw discourses (Cisneros, 2012; VanSlette & Boyd, 2011; Waisenen, 2012). VanSlette and Boyd in their comparison between trickster and outlaw discourse argue the importance of identifying outlaw discourses not just as disruptors, but as change agents that challenge the status quo and provoke either change or alternate perspectives. Likewise, Cisneros (2012) use Ono and Sloop's framework to emphasize how outlaw logic often challenge existing paradigms from within. In his examination of the
"Land Grant Question" speech, he explains that the speech represents an outlaw vernacular discourse that negotiated identity and agency for Alianza and Mexican Americans. In a study of anti-immigration grass root organization, Waisenen (2012) notes that while Ono and Sloop's framework have specified the functioning of dominant-civic discourses, dominant vernacular and outlaw vernacular discourses, the authors have neglected the potential functions of outlaw civic discourse by specifying it as an "empty cell" (Ono & Sloop, p. 73). He instead argues bordering populist as an outlaw civic discourse that is used to find a way between needs for exclusion and inclusion. As these studies imply Ono and Sloop's framework exemplify the ephemeral nature of discourses as the relationship between resistance to and reification of dominant logics is fragile.

Ono and Sloop (2002) argue that both pro and anti-immigration advocates can be bound up in the same hegemonic, dominant logics, particularly in framing immigrants as economic units rather than human beings. Further, the authors remind us, "by investigating judgments as they occur materially, the critic pulls forth existing logics as a space for the imagination of different ways of operating and talking generally" (p. 65/66). Toward this end, connecting immigration politics with group practices (Asian Indian immigrants' discursive practices) can shed light on present conditions, demonstrating the everyday discursive choices they make to impair or inspire more democratic futures. Ono and Sloop's framework has been used to understand mainstream or alternative print media, images, speech and even new media. This study would utilize this framework to understand the discursive strategies used by Asian Indian immigrants. Particularly privileging the text the study will use the concept of logics of discourse to find out the logics (meanings, reasoning, and arguments) that drive Asian Indian ethnic newspapers' representation of national immigration reform in the USA.
Immigration reforms are particularly of concern to immigrant groups as they specify terms and conditions of citizenship and thereby access to rights (Felix, Gonzales, Ramirez, 2008; Lin & Song, 2006; Matsaganis et al., 2011; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). The increasing number of immigrants in the U.S. have not only led to rising competition for resources among the growing ethnic groups (Viswanath & Arora, 2000) but also initiated calls to restrict immigration at the federal and/or at the state level (Varma, 2004). Over the years, ethnic groups in the U.S. have grown active and have established institutions to sustain their ethnicity. Institutions such as ethnic media are used by these groups’ in their attempt to shape, communicate, and establish their position in the American society (Molina Guzman, 2006; Riggins, 1992). The question that arises is to what extent ethnic media strive to protect rights of the immigrants and the extent to which they identify with other immigrant or minority groups in protecting their legal rights. Studies have shown that mainstream news discourse on immigration predominantly centers on Latino immigrants, where media represent Latino immigrants through nativistic discourses (Aguirre, Rodriguez & Simmers 2011; Chavez, 2008; Flores, 2002; Mastro & Morawitz, 2005; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Santa Ana, 1999). Though such discourses constitute citizen and alien and create and/or redefine the national imaginary, representation of other immigrant groups are largely absent in mainstream media. With the rising levels of immigration in the U.S., increasing anxieties and questions about immigration, impending immigration reforms, the absence of representation of other immigrant groups in the mainstream and the growing importance of ethnic media, the question arises about how the ongoing national immigration debate is represented in ethnic media discourses. In order to accomplish this, I will employ critical discourse analysis to find out how federal legislation and national citizenship are represented by Asian Indian ethnic press in the United States.
Asian Indian ethnic media is an excellent site for examining negotiation of citizenship as their demographic and class diversification has led to the appearance of distinct, often conflicting needs and interest on part of immigrants (Das Gupta, 2006). The 1965 immigration reforms in the United States led to arrival of a large pool of non-European immigrants, and a large part of this immigrant population has its roots in South-East Asia, specifically India (Das Gupta, 2006; Saran, 1985). The highly skilled professional immigrants who arrived immediately post 1965 were largely inclined to preserve their ethnic heritage while embracing the model minority image assigned to them by the host. As Das Gupta (2006) posits this image define citizenship in terms of the immigrant' socio-economic contribution, while blurring their group rights. With the passage of time, the arrival of new immigrants brought in a range of variation within the community along language, ethnic, class, and linguistic lines (Abraham, 2002). Das Gupta (2006) notes due to the internal diversity, immigrants from India consist of educated skilled professional (also see Portes & Rumbaut, 1990) as well as low-skilled working class immigrants who face great odds. Given the flow and diversity and the associated anxieties, different groups emerged within the immigrant community who were increasingly concerned with their rights. Segments of the community became actively engaged by either supporting or protesting against the mainstream politics and ideologies. As immigrant ethnic media function as one of the principal vehicles of socialization and communication within immigrant communities (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009; Viswanath & Arora, 2000), analyzing how Asian Indian ethnic media represent national immigration reforms debate will reveal how differently positioned immigrants produce competing ideological visions of nation, community and ethnic/racial difference.
Asian Indian immigrants

Asian Indian immigrants in the United States have not been adequately studied in communication. Only a few studies have examined the particular nuances and lived experiences of Asian immigrants in the United States (Hegde, 1998; Shah, 1999; Somani, 2010). Similarly, there is a dearth of research on Asian Indian ethnic media (Shah & Thornton, 2004; Viswanath & Arora, 1999), which serves around 63 percent of the Asian Indian immigrants in the U.S. After the introduction of the first Asian Indian ethnic newspaper in 1970, the count and reach of Asian Indian ethnic newspapers have grown rapidly. With the exception of few studies (Shah & Thornton, 2004; Viswanath & Arora, 2000) Asian Indian ethnic media remains a neglected area of study. Asian Indians are the second fastest growing minority in the U.S. (Census, 2010). In spite of this rapid growth in Asian Indian immigrant population, there is a dearth of literature on the immigrant communities within the general academic discourse on immigration, race, and ethnicity. Considering the dynamic landscape of racial/ethnic category in the U.S., the increasing presence of the community in the U.S., it is, therefore, necessary to study ethnic media discourses published by the community to understand how the community negotiates relationship with dominant and other minority groups in the U.S. This section will, therefore, trace the trajectory of the Asian Indian immigrant community in the U.S.

Early Asian Indian immigration

The first wave of Asian Indian immigrations occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Das Gupta, 2006; Jensen, 1988). However, census documents have recorded Asian Indians in the United States as early as 1820 (Das Gupta, 2006; Leonard, 1992; Jensen, 1988). The initial immigrants were predominantly agricultural workers who came in as laborers in the newly developed fishing industries, railroads, and agriculture industries in the West Coast of the
United States. This initial wave of immigration was largely characterized by a period of heightened xenophobia against Asian Indians and contradictory definitions of inclusion and citizenship within the emerging system of racial classification in the United States. During that time, the news media initially portrayed high-caste Asian Indians in positive terms, but eventually, all Asian Indians were represented as inferior, unassimilable and unfit for citizenship (Shah, 1999). In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, strategically constructed meanings of race and nation excluded Asian immigrants from becoming considered as members of the nation’s imagined community (Takaki, 1989). Specifically, for Asian Indians, constructed meanings of race and nation (social and political) were further manipulated to make sure that an immigrant group who was considered culturally and politically undesirable would be excluded from citizenship even if it were legally eligible for naturalization (Shah, 1999). Within the Black-White Framework of American society, Asian Indians were racialized as a group that was neither white nor black and counted as "all other" races in the U.S. census (Das Gupta, 2006). However, during the early 1900s Asian Indian immigrants could get U.S. citizenship by claiming in court being of Aryan descendants they were Caucasian and therefore white. Shah (1999) explains that during that time news media portrayed high-caste Asian Indians in positive terms, but in time all Asian Indians were represented as inferior, non-assimilative and unfit for citizenship. In 1923, the court ruled that not all Caucasians were white and thereby disqualified Asian Indians from whiteness and citizenship. The government stripped 65 previously naturalized Asian Indians of their citizenship (Haney-Lopez, 1996). Many Indians who had been deprived of citizenship rights were also subject to Alien Land Laws whereby a large number of migrants lost their land as well as other investments (Jensen, 1988). Finding themselves without a distinct racial category posed several issues for these immigrants as this ambivalent categorization hindered their
attempts at securing a place in this new country. With the racial barriers in place against Asian Indian incorporation into white mainstream America, the immigrants struggled to survive. These negative setbacks in the U.S. led to Asian Indian immigrants returning back to India in the following years. Later, in the midst of the Post World War II period, the U.S. government began to ease immigration by granting naturalization to some Asian Indian immigrants while installing a strict quota of accepting only 100 Indian immigrants per year (Shukla, 2003). In the entire period between 1946 and 1964, only 7,629 Asian Indians immigrated to the United States (Shukla, 2003).

**Post 1965 immigration**

Reforms to the earlier prohibitory immigration laws began in 1952 with the passing of the McCarran-Walter Act, which abolished the 1917 barriers to immigration based solely on Asian ethnicity (Das Gupta, 2006). Although the act re-opened immigration to Asian nationalities, it maintained a strict quota system for controlling the numbers of Asians allowed to immigrate. The emerging Cold War also necessitated that the United States attract Asian scientists and intellectuals to aid in the development of scientific and military technologies (Das Gupta, 2006; Maira, 2004; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). This atmosphere ushered in a new attitude towards the immigration of highly educated Asian Indians, whereby based on a healthy economy and political agenda influenced by Civil Rights movement, the 1965 Immigration Act was passed. The 1965 Immigration Act removed immigrant quotas based on nationality or ethnicity. On the surface, the Immigration Act sought to eliminate any hint of racial prejudice in policy by creating a new standard for admission (Olzak & Shanahan, 2002). In retrospect, the Act was intended to open up the United States to more immigration, but in a way that would allow the government to control inflows and reduce illegal immigration (Sassen, 1998). In place of the prior designated
quota system, the new bill favored certain aspects of immigration such as family reunification, refugee relief and prospective foreign professionals whose skills may benefit the United States (Das Gupta, 2006; Maira, 2004). Many of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the post-1965 Asian Indian immigrants are quite different from the conditions and contextual experiences of earlier immigrants. Unlike the earlier immigrants who were predominantly agricultural laborers, post-1965 immigrants were highly educated skilled professionals.

Interestingly enough, a degree of disconnection existed between the aforementioned agricultural Asian Indian immigrants and the newer urban and upwardly mobile post-1965 immigrants. One of the clearest differences is class standings and overall levels of educational attainment (Das Gupta 2006; Shukla 2003; Prashad 2000; Jensen 1988). The differences in human and social capital amongst the two immigrant eras also profoundly shaped their respective experiences in the host country.

The highly skilled immigrants who came to the United States from India after the 1965 reforms were the privileged and most talented and were not a representative cross-section of the nation's people (Abraham, 2002; Leonard- Spark & Saran, 1980; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Highly educated and professional skilled immigrants were portrayed as a "model minority," whose economic prosperity alone facilitated rapid incorporation while other factors foster maintenance of cultural identity (Saran, 1985). The success of this immigrant group was presented to counter blacks and other minorities claim to discrimination (Prashad, 2000). Segments of the Asian Indian immigrants embraced, promoted and sustained the model minority image as they perceived it as a way to distance themselves from other, lower-positioned minorities with whom they did not want to be linked, in fear that such identification would decrease the status of their own ethnic group in the U.S social hierarchy (Das Gupta, 2006;
Leonard- Spark & Saran, 1980; Saran, 1985). Das Gupta (2006) notes that this model minority image defined citizenship for Asian Indian immigrants as depended on their socio-economic contribution while obscuring their group rights.

As the numbers of Asian Indian immigrants increased, so did their political and social agendas that soon began to refocus energy on the decades-old dilemmas of racial categorization and notions of "whiteness." In the 1970 census, Asian Indians found themselves racially classified as "white." The decades of non-white status following the 1923 exclusionary act was overturned instantly with this new categorization (Das Gupta, 2006). In spite of being categorized as "white," Asian Indians continued facing racism and employment discrimination, including the glass ceiling (Barringer & Kassebaum, 1989; Fernandez, 1998; Purkayastha, 2005). Further, "white" census categorization was problematic for newly arriving Indians and other South Asian immigrants due to their inability as a group to be protected by the Civil Rights legislations. After failing to be recognized as an ethnic minority group while simultaneously encountering high levels of racial discrimination and xenophobia, the American Indian Association (AIA) went into action to re-categorize Asian Indian immigrants. In the mid-1970's, the AIA began to pressure Congress to re-categorize Asian Indians while urging the community to perform their citizenship by showing interest in the census and by making claims for a new label (Das Gupta 2006; Saran 1985; Shukla 2003). The "white" label created division in the community where the economic prosperous immigrants favored the label and dreaded being stigmatized as a minority and the professional immigrants who faced job-place discrimination preferred the minority label as they hoped to get the benefits of affirmative action. The lower-class, poor immigrants who do not fit the image of self-sufficient, contributing citizen were excluded from the circle of citizenship rights and the economically prosperous immigrants
distance themselves from the poor Asian Indians whose immigrant experiences did not match their success stories (Das Gupta, 2006).

After several months of debates and hearings, along with a newly created five-category racial classification system the census also incorporated a section for ethnic ancestry in which the term Asian Indian appeared as a result of the pressure exerted by the American Indian Association. Das Gupta (2006) claims that in its attempt to secure minority status for Asian Indians, AIA did not counter the dominant racial framework instead they adapted the dominant discourses of race and preserved the category "Caucasian," which strategically included some and excluded others. The AIA's victory to secure a separate label for Asian Indian immigrants was grounded on racially ambiguous terms of belonging (counted as neither black nor white). This made it difficult for the immigrants to identify racism. Further, it exasperated relations between Asian Indian immigrants and other minorities as the immigrants failed to recognize the minorities (such as blacks and natives) claims to discrimination (Das Gupta 2006). She further contends that Asian Indian immigrants accepted the racially ambiguous terms of identity as they were "compatible with their desire for full citizenship" (p. 23).

The late 1980s and 1990s, the immigration of sponsored relatives of Asian Indian U.S. residents changed the demographic composition of the community. The newly arrived immigrants represented greater diversity in education, occupation, class, gender, language, religion, and region of origin (Abraham, 2002). The demographic and class diversity has led to the emergence of different and often conflicting interest and needs among the Asian Indian immigrants. Prashad (2000) describes that the Asian Indian immigrants entered the U.S. by displacing blacks and natives. The dominant group absorbed the privileged Asian Indian immigrants into the model minority category by highlighting their success in social mobilization
in relation to the unsuccessful others. The immigrant group accepted racial stereotypes of other minorities as they found that with the "others" at the bottom, they were not only able to secure higher positionality but they also perceived possibilities of upward mobilization by practicing prevalent discrimination against other minorities. The immigrants were aware that blackness was a "silent referent" (Rudrappa, 2004, p. 143) in their incorporation. In order to fit in and to portray themselves as a better fit in the U.S. racial structure, they felt the need to accept the dominant cultural norms. Das Gupta (2006) contends that this accommodationist, elite, and India-centered "place taking" politics and practices prevailed amongst the Asian Indian immigrants. These place taking immigrants aspired to achieve success defined by the dominant white, accepted the projected internally homogeneous image of South Asians and adopted the ambiguous definition of their racial identity in order to position them above other minorities. Further, Das Gupta notes that the discourses of cultural preservation and model minority "deny the existence of poverty and various forms of violence, including domestic abuse and homophobia within South Asian communities" (p. 23-24). This perception is recently being challenged by space-making politics which recognize that gender, class, sexual and racial inequalities constitute citizenship. Space-makers believe that citizenship is a social and cultural construct created by the nation-state (Das Gupta, 2006). The space-makers thereby counter oppressive systems and align with other minority groups to make alternate claims towards belonging and to accurately name their communities racial formations. Divergent experience among the Asian Indian immigrant community led to the emergence of space-making organizations. These alternative structures of collective action started intervening and challenging the accommodationist place-taking politics in Asian Indian communities. Das Gupta (2006) notes the internal politics in the Asian Indian communities, where culture became a site of contestation and confrontation for the place takers.
and place-makers. While the place takers shape notions of culture to restore the social privileges they enjoyed back home, place makers problematize these social hierarchies by exemplifying anti-oppression aspects in their homeland histories. In their competing account of cultural authenticity, place takers take up the work of conservation, while the place takers do the work of redefinition. The place taker's promotion of model minority image and their discourse on culture exposes that the Asian Indian immigrants' success story essentially obscures gender, sexual, and class oppression within those communities. Rudrappa (2004) contends that Asian Indians production of cultural authenticity is not to evoke their sense of belonging to their homelands, instead, it is to claim belonging to U.S. national culture as citizens.

**Recent Asian Indian immigration**

Recent Asian Indian immigration is compounded by a number of macro factors including the current economic meltdown of the world economy, U.S. foreign policy coupled with rising nationalisms in South Asian nations, and finally, the restructuring of U.S. immigration policy and Homeland Security (Varma, 2004). In 1990 the U.S. introduced the temporary work or H-1B visas, due to the shortage of skilled laborers and impending international competition. Under this new act, 65,000 foreign skilled workers could enter the country every year for temporary employment up to six years. This quota was soon filled up by high technology companies. In 1998 under the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act increased the number of H-1B visa quota to 115,000 but was again used up before the end of fiscal year. In 2000 legislation was passed to increase the number to 195,000.

In the years following the September 11th attacks, currents of xenophobia motivated by notions of national security and terrorism have dramatically reshaped the nature of contemporary U.S. immigration. The turbulence of the contemporary moment is marked by global economic
instability, religious fundamentalists, and massive human migrations. Domestically, the issues and debates surrounding immigration and immigrants continue to dominate much political and policy discourse (Marshall & Gonchar, 2014, December 10). In recent years the currents of xenophobia motivated by notions of national security and terrorism have dramatically reshaped the nature of contemporary U.S. immigration (Chaudhury, 2008). Another important distinction of this new era of immigration is the return of Federal immigration policies that evaluate immigrants on the basis of national origin, ethnicity and religious backgrounds (Tumlin, 2004). Tumlin states that this form of racial, class, ethnic and religious profiling, called "Immigrant-Plus Profiling" has many policy implications that are reminiscent of immigration laws preceding 1965. In particular, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) seems to have created an alternate set of policies for immigrants who are desirable and who are not (Papademetriou & Terrazas, 2009, April 1). While the United States no longer excludes immigrants from citizenship based on ethnic and racial distinctions, eligibility for citizenship is now contingent on material terms such as immigration status, income, fluency in English, political history, criminal record, and family members' ability to sponsor new immigrants. In the case of the Asian Indian immigrants, although the "model minority" ideology may still be viable in the case of upward mobility for certain segments of the community, many Asian Indians continue to face gender, class, sexual, and racial inequalities (Varma, 2004).

As noted above the Asian Indian population in the United States has not been adequately studied in intercultural communication. Only a few studies have examined the particular nuances and lived experiences of Asian immigrants in the United States (Hegde, 1998; Shah, 1999; Somani, 2010). Unlike the studies that focused on assimilation and integration of Asian Indian immigrants, critical communication scholar Radha Hegde (1998) first described how Asian
Indian immigrant women negotiated their everyday gendered sexual and racial encounters. Scholars in other fields also portrayed this in their studies on Asian Indian community organizations and their relations with other racial groups (Das Gupta, 2006; Prashad, 2000; Rudrappa, 2004). Das Gupta (2006) identifies the contestation between the mainstream Asian Indians (place takers), the state, and the space- makers. She specifies that while the place- takers seek to preserve its class and gendered privilege, the state continues to constitute immigrants through racial, sexual, and gendered narratives building on the ideology of "American dream" (p. 81), which caters the model minority image. On the other hand though the space- makers realize the states power as the primary guarantor of rights they resist the brutal "power of borders as the defining feature of state sovereignty and national identity" (Das Gupta, 2006, p. 259). Das Gupta contends that the recent protection of national security above the protection of civil rights, exemplifies the patronage U.S. residents enjoy (citizens and accepted immigrants) at the expense of unwanted immigrants. Considering the heterogeneous composition of this ethnic group, their segmented experience with the oppressive system, the inter and intra-group politics (place-taking and place making politics) this critical study aims to identify the different discursive strategies and logics that are used by Asian Indian Ethnic Press here in the U.S. to represent immigration and immigrants.

**Discursive logics of nation, race, and citizenship**

Media representation of immigration and immigrants show how the concepts of race and nation are intertwined with these constructs. Immigration studies show that nation and national discourse constitute immigrants and immigration (Amaya, 2013; Chang & Aoki, 1997; Ono, 2013; Ono & Sloop, 2002). National logics and national ideology (nationalism) play a powerful role in creating and shaping public conception, which "transforms individuals into subjects of a
collectively held history" (Berlant, 1991, p. 20). In order to understand the logics of nation and nationalism, the following section will discuss how nation has been conceptualized in communication and other fields.

**Conceptualization of Nation**

Nation as a social construct has not been adequately studied in traditional intercultural communication scholarship. Nation was predominantly viewed as a "taken-for-granted" (Ono, 2013, p. 87) construct, which help to define and compare cultures and to generalize about people who reside in a specific geographical local. Critical scholars criticized this approach as it tends to normalize and perpetuate hegemony of privileged cultural perspectives and homogenizes the diversity within a nation (Martin & Nakayama, 1997; Moon, 1996; Ono, 1998, 2013). Critical research on nation called for recognition of the multiple forces and enactments (contested and often contradictory) located within the broader historical and social structure.

Critical intercultural communication scholars typically engage with theories of nation developed by scholars from outside the field of communication such as Gellner (1983), Anderson (1983, 1991), Giddens (1985), and Hobsbawn (1990). These scholars conceptualize nation as distinct modern creations and not ancient, primitive flawless constructs. Further, they argue that the nation is socially constructed by elites where national identity is imposed on the general populace in order to fulfill the political and economic agenda of the elites. Gellner (1983) was one of the first to present a comprehensive theorization of nation. He conceived nation in the context of industrialization, where he theorized that the educational system and mass media inform people about the idea of nationhood. He asserts that it is through these systems people are taught to identify with an abstract, fictitious, homogeneous community. Gellner's conceptualization shows how the state constitutes nationalism by forcing cultural homogeneity.
However, the conception failed to address the change or transformation of culture (assumed culture as static) that a nation undergoes over time.

In communication Anderson's notion of imagined community has been enormously influential. Anderson (1991) defined nation as "an imagined political community" (Anderson 1991, p. 6), which is imagined as both essentially "limited and sovereign" (p. 6). In his conception, he explains that a nation is imagined as even in the smallest nation it is impossible for the community members to know other members, yet through their imagination, the members imagine their close association with each other as a community. Further, he explicates that the nation is imagined as limited as it is bounded by finite boundaries, beyond which other nations exist. It is imagined as sovereign because the concept of nation emerged in the era of Enlightenment and revolution that threatened to overturn the European hierarchical dynastic system. He also asserts that "it is imagined as a community" (p. 7) because irrespective of the inequality and exploitation the nation is conceived as a fundamental group to which one belongs. The idea of the nation as an "imagined community" where individuals can identify with meanings of the community helps develop imaginary identification. This imaginary identification constitutes them as citizen subject (Anderson, 1991). Anderson's conception suggests that "nation" and "nationalism" have to be deliberately constructed or "invented" by somebody, and it also contends that nationalism has to come before nation, not the other way around. The critical aspect of Anderson's conception is that it highlights the intangible social-psychological nature of the national idea and it also emphasizes that the idea of nation depends on the recognition of the existence of other nations. This is because he specifies that the relations between communities are crucial in the development of nationalism. Anderson's conception differs from Gellner who argues that "nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-
consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist" (Anderson 1991, p. 6). Benedict Anderson critiques Gellner's definition because of its implied assumption that true communities exist which can then be put together to nations. Instead, he asserts that all communities are in fact imagined which means that communities can be characterized, not by their spuriousness /authenticity, but by the way they are imagined. As Anderson explains, it is this imagining through language that helps "create" symbols, history, and values that make a community of any size appear real.

Anderson convincingly argues the role of print press and colonial states in "making" nations. In the Enlightenment era, Anderson describes that the search to find a new linkage between "fraternity, power and time" was made possible by print-capitalism, which made it possible for people to "think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others in profoundly new ways" (p. 36). Anderson asserts, "print-language is what invents nationalism, not a particular language per se" (p. 134). The print capitalism that developed in Europe standardized and disseminated print languages, providing the conditions for the creation of national consciousness. In the Americas Anderson explains neither economic interest, Liberalism, nor Enlightenment provided the framework for new national consciousness; instead, it was accomplished through "pilgrim creole functionaries and provincial creole print men" (p. 65). Anderson's conceptions help to explain how nation-states today are perceived as legitimate in spite of their complexity and size. They also present ways to understand how common ideas of equality and justice become affective structures and how national histories seek to produce the most just and equal societies. Moreover, the symbolic formation of nation produces an "idea" of the nation as an "imagined community" with whose meanings individuals can identify and which, in turn, through this imaginary identification, constitute them as citizen-subjects. Thus
this conception reminds us that the nation is constructed on cultural, discursive, and social rituals of closeness and similarity. Further, he argues that mass media (e.g., newspapers) provides concurrence of discursive and social experiences across the national scenery, thereby cultivating a fraternity of citizens. Building on Anderson's conception of nation as "imagined community," for the purpose of the project the term "nationalism" will be assumed to imply the process of "imagining nation," where certain people are imagined in and certain individuals and groups are imagined out.

One of the fundamental yet ambiguous characteristics of the contemporary era is the dominance of national idea. Schnee (2001) contends that the flexibility of the national idea has been a major reason for the success of nationalism. Though objective factors such as language, shared history or territory are important tools used by nationalism to distinguish one community from other, these factors are of secondary importance. As Schnee (2001) specifies "what is more important is the manner in which the discourses are framed" (p. 1). The discourse of nationalism constitutes nation and facilitates consolidation of the imagined national community. It can also work as a space of identification, constructing national identity by enumerating the characteristics of the national and ideal citizen. As Santa Ana (2002) notes discourse of nationalism shapes truth by defining and structuring subjects, and citizens (p. 26). The project of national- self-definition of the U.S. not only includes who are imagined in and out in the national imagery but also provides conditions for inclusion. Chang and Aoki (1997) in their study of immigrants in the U.S. show how the logic of the new world order shapes U.S. national discourse. The logic entails that invasion or encroachment should be countered through increased protection of the nation from the intrusion of certain foreigners and their cultures. Amaya (2007) in his study of Latino immigrants who fought for U.S. in the Iraq war describes that the image of
nation as sovereign help the consolidation of community. The presentation of impending threat to sovereignty mediated by prominent news institutions utilize citizenship and nationalism in a racialized, gendered, and classed fashion to invoke emotion and action and to define a sphere of intimacy and membership. Such narratives erase important parts of immigrant's history while emphasizing "biographical data... that fit a nationalistic script" (Amaya, 2007, p. 245). Amaya specifies that these narratives are loaded with the intrinsic paradox of nation, where the paradox is that the conception that the nation is constituted on the idea of a horizontal community is not true for society (also see Anderson, 1991). Amaya argues that this is imminent in the American national discourse, which has always promoted equality though the "foundational economic and political structures have deferred this reality from existing" (Amaya, 2007, p. 245).

Scholars of nation emphasize the recentness and constructedness of nations as social creations of the elites in pursuit of political and economic goals. They also recognize that nations should not only be considered as social creation of the elites (in search of political and economic goals), instead it should be recognized that national subjects also participate in this construction by either buying into the dominant discourse, by opposing it, or by constructing themselves as subjects independent of the dominant construction. Though Anderson provides a range of insights into how and why the nation emerges as a salient cultural and political formation, the globalizing contingencies are not explicitly addressed in his conceptions (Schnee, 2001). Schnee adds that communication through different media play an integral role in disseminating national imagery, but understanding the role of mass media in the reproduction of national culture and identity also needs to take into account the increasing global flows and the increasing interactions among nations. Therefore, to facilitate understanding of how national discourses
function constitutively to create national subjects it is necessary to understand the constitutive nature of national discourses.

Intercultural communication studies on national discourse often build on McGee (1980) and Charland's (1987) work on constitutive rhetoric. McGee (1980) contends that national discourses are myths that create a fiction of "the people." However, national discourses facilitate groups to establish links with the broader political objectives, collective identities, and histories (Charland, 1987). As a significant part of rhetoric of socialization, national discourses have constitutive power, which induces audiences to accept extant subject positions (Charland, 1987). Further, Charland (1987) argues that through rhetorical narratives individuals identify with their subject positions which are already made for them. Constitutive discourse thereby creates a particular collective identity to legitimate particular ways of collective life by transcending individual differences. Charland (1987) specifies that national discourses function constitutively by producing ideological effects, which create specific collective identities and driving the collectivities into action. Therefore, national discourses have the power to enact, create, institute or determine subjects and enable people to engage in political action. Other intercultural scholars such as Hasian and Flores (1997) argue that group identities and sense of belonging are expressed in national discourses, thereby suggesting that it is not just the elites who constitute subjects via national discourses. As Hasian and Flores assert, national discourses constitute subjects by reassembling "traditions, collective memories and histories" (1997, p. 92). Groups articulate new, temporary, or contradictory discourses by forging elements from existing discourses, or from previous constitutive discourses (Charland, 1987). The agency of the communities is therefore reflected when they repeatedly recreate and imagine nationalities discursively (Halualani, 1997; Hasian & Flores, 1997). Drzewiecka (2002) has furthered the
understanding of the constructive function of discourse by investigating how the collective identity of Polish diaspora is created in discourses that aim "to legitimate certain forms of collective power and action in between national and cultural formations" (p. 1). The study reveals how complex identifications are constituted by the diasporic group in the American contexts. Halualani (2002) demonstrates how the 'Aloha' spirit is codified into the civil discourse and ideology of multiculturalism by the state apparatus. This state discourse of multiculturalism creates and influences a shared local culture and identity based on commonality and embodies homogeneity, which helps in overriding the differences among peoples. Her study specifically demonstrates how the dominant groups' power interests articulate identities of groups which place them within already existing dominant discourses. The studies mentioned above provide an insight into the constitutive function of national discourses that creates a "fiction" of national subjects. National discourses create a particular collective identity to legitimate particular ways of collective life by transcending individual differences as the subjects accept the extant identity positions. Therefore, discourse is constitutive of social relations where all knowledge, talk, and argument takes place within a discursive context through which meanings are shaped for its participants. Powerful groups define who are included in a nation, and those who are outside of it. At the same time, political subjects might or might not "buy into" the fiction of subject created by the powerful groups. To this end, this project aims to identify whether Asian Indian immigrants adopt the dominant ideology of nation or they construct themselves through outlaw logic that falls outside the realm of dominant ideology. The next section will detail on race and how it constructs the national discourse.
**Discursive Logics of race**

Race and nation are correlated social and political constructs. Balibar (1991) explains that race and nation are fused together in the national formation as relational terms, which are interdependent and inseparable in nationalist thought and practice. For example, race is an important construct in rhetorical arguments on topics such as the nation’s unity, and/or development, and/or citizenship, etc. Balibar (1991) further argues that racism is constantly emerging out of nationalism directed both towards the exterior and the interior of the nation to create the boundaries between the sacred kin and the "alien." This is significant because the inclusion or exclusion of "races" in the constitution of nation is determined by who is creating the nation. Other scholars note that instituting and sustaining Anderson’s (1991) conceived national imagined community requires establishing geopolitical and cultural frontiers (to mark the spatial foundation for shaping shared identity). Additionally, it requires advancing understanding about who will be accepted (also excluded) as authentic members of the national community (DeChaine, 2005, 2012; Haney Lopez, 1991; Ono, 2012; Shah, 1999). The notion of inclusion and exclusion are often guided by perceptions of racial distinction (superiority and inferiority) developed from a nation's sociopolitical, economic, cultural situation at any specific historical context (Balibar, 1991; Goldberg, 1990; Omi & Winant, 1994). Therefore, understanding the relationship between race and nation becomes crucial in order to comprehend the construction of immigrants and immigration.

Critical and cultural studies scholars (Omi, & Winant, 1994; 1997, 2000; Hall, 1997; Goldberg, 2002, 2006) contended race as a discursive construct, where race has been conceived as a structural formation and as a lived social identity. Omi and Winant (1994) specify race as a complicated issue, as it is not simply linked to skin color but also include a varied range of
cultural meanings and implications. These scholars further theorize that race is not a fixed category but, it is institutionalized in a structured system known as the "racial state," consisting of local, state, and federal governmental structures. It is supported by the courts of law, military power, public policy, public and educational institutions, and, local and national media (Omi & Winant, 1994; Goldberg, 2002). Through administrative policies, race as a structural formation lays down official procedures and conditions for identification, which pervade private, everyday experiences of social subjects (Ono, 2012). Hall (1997) explains that the meaning of racial signifiers such as skin color is not fixed, rather they are discursive constructs, or "floating signifiers" that depend on cultural contexts. Goldberg (2006) describes race as a means of understanding or making sense, an enactment in our daily life. As such the construe is determined by political, economic, and cultural contexts that positions people in a particular way in the social order.

In intercultural communication positivist scholars have mostly focused on the concepts of culture and ethnicity rather than race. Predominantly they have preferred the notion of culture as nation and centered on communities of speech, where race and diversity was considered as dialectics between power structures and contextualized subjective sense-making (Hecht, Ribeau, & Alberts, 1989; Hecht, Collier & Ribeau, 1993). These earlier scholars have conceptualized race as a symbol of identity and group category instead of conceiving it as a socio-political construct. As Halualani, Fassett, Morrison & Dodge (2006) argue, the studies have ignored how "race" and "diversity" are constructed between structural formations and contextualized individual sense-makings. Critical intercultural communication scholars moved to study race and culture as ideological struggles of vested interests, and describe how meanings are constructed via these struggles (Ono, 1998; Martin & Nakayama, 1999; Collier, et. al. 2001; Flores, Moon &
Thus, utilizing this perception, diversity and race are re-iterated as power-vested denotations that position certain cultural groups over others (Flores et. al., 2006). In a study centering on the dialectic relation between structural and personal dimensions of diversity and race constructs, Halualani et al. (2006) describe that individuals deliberately articulate and understand race by using raceless diversity where race is superficially ripped off its power inequalities. The authors argue that the "co-articulation of race, as both structure and group agency, problematically de-emphasizes the structural conditions of race and indicts specific racial/ethnic groups for racial exclusions, racist behavior, and racial/ethnic entrenchment" (p. 72). Likewise, Flores et al. (2006) contend that the location of racism in individuals or groups rather than the system has laid the way to "discourse of tolerance and multiculturalism" (p. 183). Scholarship on race has implications for understanding the arrangements of power and suggests that discourse about race emanates from differential positions in society, reflecting social structures of power. Further, critical intercultural scholars have concentrated on how whiteness has become normalized in the discourse of race (Dyer, 1997; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995; Nakayama & Martin, 1998; Shome, 1996). Nakayama and Krizek (1995) argue that because whiteness is privileged as the cultural norm, it goes unmarked, where "the invisibility of whiteness has been manifested through its universality" (p. 293). Furthermore, when whiteness goes unmarked, anyone not white subsequently is defined as the "Other" and becomes "raced" (Dyer, 1997, p. 1). Moreover, the research on whiteness does not essentialize whiteness (such as only white people do racism) and has implications for enacting racial privilege by other groups in different contexts.

In U.S. scholars’ note that discourses of nation and race create national identity and racial identity, which depicts Whiteness as a sign of superiority and inclusion, where non-whites are
represented as inferior, limiting and at times excluded from the social, political and cultural realms of a nation (Chang & Aoki, 1999; Shah, 1999). Lopez (1996) notes that for a significant period of time access to citizenship required that immigrants be legally recognized as white. Particularly, immigration laws were designed such that immigrant populations were characterized based on their racial fitness for membership in the national framework (King, 2000). Institutionally enforced domestic racial categories (census) continue to be uniformly applied inside the geographical frontiers of the United States. Chan and Aoki (1999) note that examining immigration and immigrants' entry and existence in the racialized space of the United States delivers the prospect of investigating the racial structures that strengthen and establish the nation-state. As Balibar (1991) explains creation of unmatched racial categories within the territories of a nation-state aids and reinforces (political, legal, material, etc.) the sovereign national borders, which consecutively boosts the salience of prevailing racial categories within those frontiers. Such examination would reveal the practices via which race is used to allocate power and sustain racial privilege.

Examination of immigrants shows the dynamics of racial formation. When immigrants enter the political/cultural/legal space of the United States they "become" differentially racialized as Asian American, Black, Latina/o, and White and the differential racialization of immigrants is apparent in the dissimilar treatment of White immigrants when paralleled with others racialized as non-whites (Chang & Aoki, 1999, Shah, 1999). This differentialist racism, where both nativism and racism reciprocally constitute each other, operates to maintain a particular conception of the nation. Chang and Aoki (1999) note that as the national community is constructed as White and Black, Asian Americans and Latinos are discursively produced as foreign. Further, the fear of immigration is highlighted in such a manner that only certain
immigrant bodies are represented as threat. The authors describe that news media represent illegal immigrants from Mexico and China as impending danger and threat to the nation, however, the presence of illegal Italian immigrants (the biggest group of undocumented immigrants in New York) is obscured (Chang & Aoki, 1999). In the U.S. the designated non-whites (inside and exterior to their nation-space) turn out to be marked as "Others" whose apparent inferiority act as the foundation and justification for exclusion or oppression (Goldberg, 1993; Shah, 1999). On the other hand, Whites are represented through positive characteristic, which is deemed as suitable for citizenship and inclusion (Dyer, 1997; Haney Lopez, 1996; Shah, 1999). Shah (1999) notes that though the process of racial differentiation omissions and inclusions begins in the political realm, it is also extended to the cultural territory. Thus, newspapers, as a key resource of cultural construction and information, perform a significant role in the construction of meanings of race and nation.

Media selection, emphasis, and representation through recognizable frames of reference help institute and sustain geopolitical and cultural frontiers of the nation and the racial criteria through which people are incorporated and omitted (Gilroy, 1991; Husband, 1994; Shah & Thornton, 1994; Thornton & Shah, 1996). Scholars note the fluidity of racial formation particularly observing that these racial constructions are themselves subject to strategic rearrangement and may become central points around which one might organize identity politics (Chang & Aoki, 1999, Shah, 1999). To this end, this project will focus on Asian Indian ethnic newspapers to understand the logics of race and nation used by ethnic media as they constitute immigration and immigrants in the U.S.
Discursive Logics of citizenship

The term citizenship is used in so many different and interrelated ways that it is hard to momentarily envision the spectrum of things and practices that it refers to. The theories about citizenship range from approaches that highlight the association between citizenship and involvement in politics, in other words political engagement (Berlant, 1991, 2002; Elliot, 2001; Miller, 1993); approaches surrounding law and rights (Bosniak, 2006, DeChaine, 2009; Ono, 2012); approaches that emphasize cultural belonging and community (Berlant, 1997; Ong, 1996); and drastic pluralistic methods that construct the vision of a separated citizenship, where any identity can find its place (Amaya-Castro, 2011). These notions of citizenship are the outcomes of persistent accounts of political and legal conceptions of imagined communities (nation) and state. The descriptions present a normative and a realistic account of the state, its sovereignty, its subjects, and their legal and political status. Citizenship discourse provides an account of what is vital in the contemporary state of affairs, centered around the social practices that institute citizenship, how it is rooted in legal rules about rights as well as about duties, and about abilities and jurisdiction (Amaya, 2013).

According to Berlant (1997), simplifying the understanding of citizenship has a structural function, which it is to make ‘citizenship’ usable for nationalism. Scholars explain that in the context of U.S. citizenship can be numerous things, however, in each of its manifestation it is both shaped and affected by the presence of legality and illegality regimes (Amaya, 2013; Chang & Aoki, 1999; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Citizenship can be comprehended as a system of protection, where immigrants are constituted in reference to economic stability and/or welfare, cultural homogeneity or social structure, or in reference to security and criminality concerns (Chavez, 2007; DeChaine, 2009; Ono, 2012). In each of these stories, illegal migration is created
as a conquest, as multitudes of people "breaking the law" (Chavez, 2007; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Chavez (2007) explains though the language used to constitute illegality may differ they generally are grounded on the same logic that calls for construction of physical barriers, and criminalization of migrants thereby preventing their disappearing into the population. Such constitution is presented as justified as it is employed as a measure to block a threat or danger. Citizenship is then manifested physically (such as ID card or passport), which symbolically represented to protect the integrity of its territory, and the economic and social welfare of its citizens (Ono, 2012). Citizenship, therefore, is not only to guard citizens' "birthright," it also serves to protect the imagined nation, by ensuring that through defensive immigration policies economic prosperity and social unity is sustained (Ono, 2012). Further, citizenship serves to protect individuals from skepticism and prevents their marginalization from everyday activities such as getting a job or health care (Amaya- Castro, 2011). This protection, however, is only necessary because of the notion of illegality restricts large proportions of public life. Amaya- Castro (2011) explains that the logic is, therefore, cyclic, as citizenship protects the public from the dangers of illegality, which in turn is the result of citizenship discourse.

As scholars note citizenship can also be conceived as membership and belonging (Chang & Aoki, 1997; Chavez, 2008; Ono, 2012), where to be a citizen signifies sharing the dominion over the state of affairs. The citizenship build here on the logic of nationalism aims to proliferate the value of these networks, to block them off from cultural impurity, to emphasize the political society in the terrain, and to make sure that only those selected to enter into the political society through suitable procedures can actually come in (Chang & Aoki, 1997; Ono, 2012). Such conception is meant to reinforce the association of citizens to the body politic and to expand the reach of the political community to other areas of life (Ono, 2012). As the idea of nation is made
stronger, it strengthens community ties. However, such ideology strategically binds some while excludes others, where individuals are separated based on ethnicity, national origin, and their immigration status (legal or illegal). This exclusion is not the specific to only illegal migrants but is shared by other groups, such as minorities, other migrants who are at the margins of the national imagery thereby increasing the distance between center and periphery within a community (Amaya, 2013; Amaya-Castro, 2011). As Chang and Aoki (1997) argue based on a sense of who belong to the national community, citizenship often works to evoke distrust about one’s membership and overall legality.

Based on the discourse of rights, citizenship is now conceived perhaps in the most sophisticated legal and institutional environment (Chavez, 2008). Somers (2008) defines citizenship as "the right to have rights" (p. 5) following Earl Warren and Hannah Arendt’s famous formulation, based on recognition, inclusion, and membership in a political entity and civil society. Citizenship becomes a discursive mode of public action that is "always conditioned by social status, relations of power, institutional factors, and material constraints" (DeChaine, 2009, p. 45). The utopian notion of democratic states accomplishing a humane agenda of equality for all is coming under pressure (Amaya-Castro, 2011). As DeChaine (2009) contends citizenship enactment necessarily involves hegemonic struggles over the very meaning of the term "citizen" in a multi public sphere. Ignoring an increasing number of people being omitted from the usual political, social and cultural life of a nation-state can only be possible when the politics of defiance and visibility are suppressed from the national imagery under the cloak of national equality and nondiscrimination.

Further, citizenship is used as a "technology of power" (Amaya, 2013, p. 15) by nation-state to constitute a modern political form of consciousness, political agents and political
subjectivities. The political agents structure the political world through political practices, thereby giving fluidity to the nation-state. These subjectivities are constructed by history, discourses, and social and racial formations. Chang and Aoki (2012) explain that the increased porosity of borders in terms of flows of information and capital has led to a reconfiguration of nation-states. However, the rearticulation of the nation-state is accomplished through the restricted movement of certain individuals across borders, which is often expressed along problematic racialized lines.

Critical intercultural scholars have provided crucial directions to the study of immigrants and immigration, particularly focusing on the intertwinements of logics of nation, citizenship, and race. The scholars agree that the discursive construction of immigrants along racialized lines need to be analyzed within contexts, as it is an intrinsically questionable social and political category. With the increasing globalization that is transforming important features of social existence, studying ethnic group's representation becomes important as it would help to realize how this transformation are affecting the relationship between diverse groups of people living together. This conceptual framework, therefore, therefore enables understanding of how logics of race, nation, and citizenship are associated as the immigrant group constitutes their relationship with the dominant, minorities and other immigrant communities. Scholarship on immigrant representation shows most studies in the U.S. have been done from the perspective of the dominant community. Therefore, there is a need to study how logics of nation and race are articulated to represent immigrants and immigration in ethnic newspapers, particularly of a community that has been historically racially coded in ambiguous ways. This study, therefore, will focus on the logics used by Asian Indian ethnic newspapers as they recontextualize the national immigration reforms.
Dominant Media representation of immigration

Media representations of immigration create knowledge and shape society's understanding of what is just, unjust, good or bad regarding immigration and immigrants (Cisneros, 2008; Flores, 2003; Hasian & Delgado, 1998; Miller, 1994; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Shah, 1999; Stewart, Pitts, & Osborne, 2011, van Dijk, 1988, 1998). Media representation analyses show the position of a discourse in relationship to other discourses in terms of dominant ideologies and social hierarchies. Media discourses show how representations depend on existing cultural assumptions about immigrants and immigration in order to make sense. It also helps reveal the "cultural fabrics that circumscribe future political acts, discourses, and resistances" (Ono & Sloop, p. 6).

Media representation literature shows that immigration and immigrants are constituted through dominant ideologies of nationalism, race and whiteness (Chang & Aoki, 1998; Cisneros, 2008; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Santa Ana, 1999; Shah, 1999; van Dijk, 1988, 1998, 2003). These ideologies structure how citizens and aliens are defined and shift, recreate and/or redefine borders (Chang & Aoki, 1998; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988, 1998, 2003). They also shape representations of immigrants as invaders, criminals, weeds, animals, pollution, infestation, or carrier of diseases (Cisneros, 2008; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Santa Ana, 1999; Shah, 1999; van Dijk, 1988). Representations of immigrants are also often ambivalent as they juxtapose opposing meanings (Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Discourses founded on dominant ideologies, shape perception, judgment and decision making regarding immigration, immigrants and their rights and privileges (Aguirre, Rodriguez, & Simmers, 2011; Chan & Aoki, 1998; Chavez, 2008; Downing & Husband, 1995; Mastro & Morawitz, 2005; Stewart, Pitts, & Osborne, 2011; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988). The meanings, reasoning,
and arguments immigrants are constructed through the following discourses: border discourses, citizenship discourse, discursive construction of immigrants as threat and ambivalence in media discourse. These discourses are explicated in detail below.

**Border discourses**

Border discourses are one of the main discourses that constitute immigration and immigrants. Media representations of immigration conceptualize borders both in terms of physical materiality focusing on actual physical areas that need maintenance and protection, and in symbolic terms that constitutes division, differentiates "us and "them" and marks boundaries of civic identity (Chavez, 2012; DeChaine, 2009, 2012; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Ono, 2012). Representations shape the meanings of border, identify how it should function, and determine its relative permeability and impermeability. Border definition determines where the border is, decides who is properly on one or the other side of it and establishes where one nation-state begins and another ends. Discourses also show how borders are constructed to function as constraining mechanisms that perform the task of inclusion and exclusion. Further, borders become identity markers by describing who will be included or excluded in the nation-state.

Border discourses strategically shift meaning by representing borders as vulnerable because threatened by those who cross it. Borders operate by identifying illegal border crossers who are criminals, diseased and carrier of diseases (DeChaine, 2009; Downing & Husband, 1995; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Ruiz, 2002). Such representations persistently associate undocumented immigrants with suspicious practices, such as fraud, crime, gang war and emphasize the illegality of their status (Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988). Representation of undocumented immigrants as diseased bodies also mark the vulnerability of the border as it features the border as a barricade that separates "their disease and our health" (Ruiz, 2002, p. 40;
also see Flores, 2003). Negative portrayals of border crossers legitimate increased measures of border enforcement and suppress potential sympathy for border crossing subjects. Representations of immigrants create knowledge about what the border is supposed to represent and how it should function in order to prevent unwanted migration. Such knowledge, therefore, justifies the effectiveness of tight regulation of geopolitical borders, interlinks borders with national rights, determines immigrants' access to rights and while confirming that conditions of national belonging-ness leave immigrants as targets of nativistic racism (Chang & Aoki, 1997; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988).

Construction of borders as a constraining mechanism is often shaped through the political and economic agenda of nation-state, which strategically portrays narratives of national stability, integrity and economic reality (Flores, 2003; DeChaine, 2005, 2009; Rowe, 2004). Media discourses construct borders by positioning immigrants in relation to economic needs (Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Such representations not only portrayed immigrants as laborers required for economic success and growth but also specified them as "controllable" (Flores, 2003, p. 370). Representation of borders as a constraining mechanism (surveillance and border control) help to assure that large numbers of immigrant laborers come into the nation to do the work that ordinary citizens do not want and that the system of surveillance and control guarantees that those immigrant workers will leave when the work is done or when they are no longer needed (Flores, 2003; Ono, 2012). Border functions as a mechanism for control, elimination, and/or ejection, where its role as a marker of space in certain respect becomes less important to its function in regulating inclusion and exclusion. DeChaine (2005) suggests that the border a site of control is also then affectively a site of anxiety for those fearful that restrictions will be applied to them, as well as anxiety for those looking for greater control. Thus, the
constituted border consists of the customs that create the settings for exclusion. Conceptualizing the border as a site and result of anxiety and a means of exclusion helps to recognize the borderline not only in geographical terms but also "in terms of both effect and affect: how borders affect lives, both materially and spiritually" (Ono, 2012, p. 21).

Further, border discourses construct immigrant identity and determine terms and conditions of inclusion. Ono (2012) specifies that borders are not just a geo-political boundary that physically separates the nation-state and its people from "others," instead as the struggle over the border become struggle over inclusion, border becomes figurative. Media discourses symbolically construct the border as a mechanism that labels, produces, and/or regulates the space of difference (Chang & Aoki, 1999; DeChaine, 2005; Horsti, 2008; Ono, 2012; van Dijk, 1988). Borders perform the function of both division and control by differentiating the self from other, one culture from another, desirable from undesirable, and more prominently "us" from "them" (DeChaine, 2005, 2012; Demo, 2005; Flores, 2003; Ono, 2012; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988, 2003). Scholars note that borders continue to mark immigrants even after their entry (Chang & Aoki, 1999, Ono, 2012). This is because border struggles continue as migrants move within the nation-state. Flores (2003) contends that immigrants carry the border because even when they are situated at locations far away from the geopolitical border, they are susceptible targets of discrimination and exploitation. Furthermore, Ono (2012) notes that immigrants are reminded of how they represent the border through constant "othering." Media describe migration of undocumented immigrants within the nation-state as problematic. Studies show that even in sites further away from the geopolitical border influx of undocumented immigrants is represented as an intrusion (Ono, 2012; Ruiz, 2002; Stewart, Pitts & Osborne, 2011). Such representation enforces a figurative border, which constantly reminds immigrants that they have
crossed the border. For documented immigrants attaining permanent residence or citizenship is not sufficient for a complete or successful border crossing (Chang & Aoki, 1999; Flores, 2003; Ono, 2012; Ruiz, 2002). Scholars note that through continued surveillance and policing immigrants are marked by borders. However, all immigrants are not denoted in the same way as some immigrants are accepted, while others (sometimes even their descendants born in the host nation) remain foreigners forever. Chang and Aoki (1999) argue that the constricted movement of some immigrants across borders has led to the racialized reconfiguration of nation-state. A border signifies a site of contestation over inclusion, access, rights, and as immigrants themselves become marked as borders they function as a barrier that prevents attainment of such elements.

The above discussion shows how dominant ideology of nationalism that constitutes who belongs in the national imagery influence conception of borders to construct and shape perceptions of immigration and immigrants. As Ono (2012) notes borders, are not just present physically, instead borders provide "potential limitations on what we imagine others and ourselves to be (p. 31). The next section will detail citizenship discourse that constructs immigration and immigrants.

Citizenship discourse

In the contemporary landscape of massive immigration citizenship discourse often constructs immigrants by portraying the social, political and economic relationship between the individual and the state, particularly noting who belongs and who is excluded from the national imagery. Following Earl Warren and Hannah Arendt, Somers (2008) defines citizenship as the "right to have rights," (p. 5) that are granted and sustained based on acceptance and membership in a political and civil society. Somers notes that this definition includes two distinct kinds of
rights. One right is the foundational right to political and social membership as well as both legal and actual inclusion and recognition. The other right contains the civil-juridical rights, which are the civil, political and social rights. This conception considers membership as the sole requirement for citizenship and describes rights to social and political membership as unconditional. The "right to have rights" or the foundational right to inclusion, membership, and recognition is, therefore, a normative ideal, which is incomplete unless complemented by historical and structural foundations. Laurent Berlant (1997) argues that citizenship is a "status whose definition is always in process" (p. 20), which means that definition and meanings of citizenship fluctuate over place and time. They can range from the notion of being a good citizen, (implying responsible membership in a social group) to strict legal definitions of rights and privileges (Chavez, 2008). Citizenship is thus no longer conceived only in terms of a legal relation between the individual and the state, but as a "technology of power that has productive capabilities" (Amaya, 2013, p. 15) to alter identity, sense of belonging, social positioning, cultural assumptions, and institutional practices.

Media representations are central to the understanding of how citizenship is negotiated in the balance of powers between the economic, social, and political spheres. Immigrants are represented through a citizenship discourse that describe how political and social membership will be measured and valued, and who will or will not receive social privileges. Amaya (2013) argues that media construct citizenship excess. Citizenship excess postulates that citizenship "is inherently a process of uneven political accumulation and that the unevenness follows ethno-racial lines" (Amaya, 2013, p. 2). Citizenship excess explains ethno-racial inequality (unequal distribution of rights and duties), which is produced and sustained by the nation-state and the political, cultural and legal systems. Citizenship excess hence explains anti-immigrant sentiments
that push certain immigrant groups "down and away" (Amaya, 2013, p. 2) in order to preserve the ethno-racial character of the nation-state, and provides whites a chance to claim a legitimate monopoly over the state. As Amaya contends media are required to construct political legitimacy in contemporary society. Media representations of migrants can tell us what mode of inclusion and exclusion is promoted and put limit on immigrants' citizenship rights (Aguirre, Rodriguez, & Simmers, 2011; Chang & Aoki, 1997; Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Shah, 1998; Stewart, Pitts, & Osborne, 2011). Such representations construct knowledge about citizens and aliens in terms of dominant ideologies of morality, economics, and race, invoke hate and resentment and push immigrants "down and away from rights" (Amaya, 2013, p. 2).

Chang and Aoki (1997) explain that United States' self-definition as a nation is built on ideologies of humanity, economy, race and morality, which not only provide terms and conditions of inclusion and exclusion but also give the path for the transition from outsider to citizen. Studies show that media represent immigrants in a dehumanizing manner by referring to them as economic commodities, weeds, and/or animals (Ono & Sloop, 2002; Ruiz, 2002; Santa Ana, 1999). These metaphors are indicators of deeply-maintained conceptions of what (not who) immigrants are. More importantly, these portrayals render undocumented immigrants unfit for benefits of citizenship or legal migration and such a world-view precludes any perception that they are also granted by birth with the same human rights as citizens and that they should be shown due respect for the difficult and ill-paid work they provide to the American society. Santa Ana (1999) explains that media representation of immigrants as animals and weeds present a contrasting dichotomy between immigrants (represented as animals and weeds) and citizens (humans). Based on common natural law such portrayal invokes argument that citizens as human beings are vested by privileges and rights whereas immigrants (represented as animals and
weeds) have no such privileges in social institutions and are inherently inferior. Immigrants are also dehumanized as economic commodities. Media representations make immigrants' path to citizenship contingent on their contributions to the economy (Awad, 2012; Flores, 2003; Kilby, Horowitz & Hylton, 2013; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Immigrants are represented in terms of economic value associated with their position within the capital system, instead of as members of a social community (Awad, 2012; Flores, 2003; KhosraviNik, 2009; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Stewart, Pitts, & Osborne, 2011). Media discourses connect the fiscal cost associated with an apparent increase of immigrants, particularly undocumented immigrants. Repeated citations of the excessive economic expense borne by American society with minimal returns emphasize the abuse borne by the taxpayers. Such representations create division among citizens and immigrants.

Representations of immigrants also restrain access to citizenship along racial lines (Amaya, 2007; Flores, 2003; Shah, 1999). Studies show that media discourses manipulate meanings of whiteness limiting the rights and privileges of citizenship only to those designated white (Flores, 2003; Shah, 1999). Predominantly, Latino or Asian immigrants' political and cultural status are rendered as "illegal" or "inassimilable," while white immigrants are constructed as superior and unproblematic. Scholars note that as immigrants enter the political cultural or legal space of the U.S. they are differentially racialized as Black, Asian, Latino etc (Chang & Aoki, 1997; Shah, 1999) and whiteness as an unmarked category becomes invisible and hence universal. Chang and Aoki (1997) contend that the differential racialization of immigrants is evident in the difference in treatment of White immigrants compared with those from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. European immigrants identified as white remain unseen (due to invisibility of whiteness) and thereby are beyond the reach of racial
distinctions that constantly pits immigrants against each other for economic gains and political power (Shah, 1999). Representation of immigrants constituted through distinctions along race, class, political lines create a racial hierarchy and provide more opportunity for social control of immigrants by the nation state. Amaya (2013) argues that media representations create uneven political capital accumulation, along racial hierarchies, which privileges some groups over others in terms of their access to rights. He contends that mainstream media discriminate against Latino citizens and immigrants by restricting and excluding their participation in mainstream narratives and balkanizing Spanish language media. As a result of both discrimination (pushing down) and balkanization (pushing away) of Latinos, the supremacy of whites and the vertical ethno-racial hierarchies were secured and preserved.

Media portrayals constitute immigrants as deviant from the image of the ideal national subject (Awad, 2012; Kilby, Horowitz & Hylton, 2013; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Ono and Sloop (2002) note that contemporary citizenship discourse in the U.S. constitute immigration in moral terms, where those who follow U.S. law and procedure to become U.S. citizens are cast as good and moral citizens and those who do not follow expectations are seen as bad and immoral "illegals." Representation of undocumented immigrants as immoral and criminal for illegally crossing borders and cutting in line in front of those waiting for a legal admission creates an image that does not match the notion of ideal national subject (Kilby, Horowitz & Hylton, 2013; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Further, Awad (2012) shows the index of acceptance to the nation-state is often limited only to well-adjusted contributing migrants, and as minority groups predominantly do not fit into this image (due to the consistent representation as economic burden) they are portrayed as deviant in relation to an essentialized notion of national subject. Such representation
produces knowledge about who counts as "fit" for social membership, thereby challenging immigrants' prospect of citizenship.

Citizenship discourses have the power to shape public consciousness and political and cultural practices (the national community). Reviewed studies contend that due to the presence of these accessible discourses there is an increasing gap between those who are citizens, those who were documented immigrants, and those who were not. The next section will detail on the threat imagery that media uses in their representation of immigrants.

**Discursive construction of Immigrants as threat**

Media discursively construct immigrants as various kinds of threat (DeChaine, 2009; Flores, 2003; Inda, 2000; Johnson, 1996; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988). A threat is constituted as a flood, economic burden, criminals, diseases, parasites or pathogens, pollution, or alien, thereby invoking panic. Scholars note that such representations make the threat effective and legitimate and invoke antagonistic sentiments towards immigrants.

Crime is presented as the most common consequence of undocumented immigration in the news media (Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988). News reports describe dangers posed by undocumented immigrants because they not only entered the country by breaking laws but they also often engage in illegal criminal activities (Flores, 2003; Greenberg & Hier, 2001; Ibrahim, 2011; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Ono & Sloop, 2002). Greenberg & Hier (2001) demonstrate how news discourse distinguishes between immigrants by portraying the newly arrived undocumented migrants in the Canadian West as the "criminal class of migrants" (p. 563) who threaten the welfare and stability of the nation by getting involved in crime and drugs. Similarly, other scholars (Ibrahim, 2011; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) note the characterization of undocumented immigrants as violent criminals, law breakers, and
cheaters. Flores (2003) notes that in contemporary media representations of undocumented immigration and criminalities are so closely connected discursively that "the slippage from immigrant to criminal seems almost natural" (p.363). The representation of immigrants as criminals invokes disintegration of the welfare state, perceived threat to territorial sovereignty by unwanted outsiders, and apprehension that government can no longer provide security, thereby igniting and rekindling the fear of the "other" (Ono & Sloop, 2002, p. 33; also see Flores, 2003).

Media studies in the U.S. and Europe show the predominance of metaphors of aquatic disaster that suggest the imminent threat posed by the influx of immigrants (Charteris- Black, 2006; Nevins, 2002; van Dijk, 1988). These studies show that metaphors such as flow, torrent, wave and flood not only signify the impending threat to the nation by increased immigration but also heighten emotional fears associated with penetration of the national border. Other natural threat metaphors include representation of immigrants as pollution, which creates an imagery of pristine nature being threatened by toxic chemicals (Cisneros, 2008). Such imagery suggests that stricter measures are needed to keep the dangers out.

Historically immigrants are portrayed as an economic threat to the citizens of the nation as they not only displace citizens on the job market but also drain public benefits (Aguirre, Rodriguez & Simmers, 2011; Flores, 2003; Johnson, 1996; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1988). News media construct this threat imagery by repeated portrayal of immigrants as draining social and public resources. Media discourses also metaphorically and metonymically represent immigrants as "parasite," "invasion" and/or "alien" who take away scarce resources without providing anything to the host in return (Inda, 2000; Nevins, 2002; Stewart, Pitts, & Osborne, 2011). These representations portray immigrants as threatening the overall well-being and prosperity of domestic U.S. citizens.
Media also conjure up threat narratives by constructing undocumented immigrants as an infestation, diseased or carriers of diseases (Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Ruiz, 2002). Studies note that media discourses objectify immigrants by asserting the threat "their" diseased body would bring to "our" citizen bodies. The emphasis on disease positions immigrants as bodies that can potentially infect the national body (Ono & Sloop, 2002; Ruiz, 2002). Representations as a disease are effective ways to express the national vulnerability and to present ways that can be adopted to regulate infestation and spread of the diseases. At all levels (national and local) immigrants were characterized negatively and their immigration represented as a threat to the nation and the social status quo. The next section details the ambivalence present in media representation of immigrants.

Ambivalence in media discourse

While explicitly negative stereotypes predominate, some seemingly positive representations create ambivalence. Studies demonstrate that the seemingly positive arguments are always countered by a negative counter argument thereby producing ambivalence in the representation of immigrants (Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002). The presence of ambivalence within media discourses is evident as immigrants who are represented as foreign and unwanted are also contradictorily represented as desirable at times. Ono and Sloop (2002) argue that representation of immigrants in ambivalent ways is the result of the continuing uncertainty around immigration and immigrant, particularly in terms of social membership, rights, and privileges. Further, Flores (2003) notes that such ambivalence becomes more prominent at times of economic shifts (boom or recession) or political instability (war or threats of terrorism). Studies show that media ambivalently represent undocumented immigrants as economic units,
diseased and as moral or immoral. This section will elaborate on each of these ambivalent representations.

Media discourses are shaped by ambivalent capitalistic logics in their construction of immigrants as economic commodities. Media represent immigrants in contradictory ways by describing them as desirable human capital because they are cheap productive labor and also as undesirable laborers if they do "anything other than jobs that facilitate the efficiency of the capital process" (Ono & Sloop, 2002, p. 27; also see Flores, 2003). Studies note that immigrants constructed as the 'other' are constrained within a structural binary either as servile laborers (inferior to domestic citizens) or are expelled due to their detrimental influence on the economic development of the nation (Flores, 2003; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Shah, 1999). Specifically, immigrants are represented as desirable for their economic contributions but simultaneously as draining the welfare system. Such arguments use capitalistic appeals to influence those who consider economic gain when making policy decisions. Economic ambivalence is also evident in representations of undocumented immigrants as a threat to the job market or as occupying an extremely marginalized socio-political space (Chavez, 2009; Ruiz, 2002; Ono & Sloop, 2002). However, Ono and Sloop (2002) note the "impossibility" of illegal immigrants’ stealing job opportunities from local residents. Due to their lack of relevant working experiences, language proficiency, and unlawful status immigrants often do not fit job profiles that are desirable by citizens and instead take up jobs that are not preferred by others. As Ono and Sloop contend, the seemingly positive arguments are undermined by obscuring reality and by projection of immigrants in negative terms. Such ambivalence marks and translates undocumented immigrants in terms of economic value without any acknowledgment of other possibilities of being seen and treated as members of a social community.
Ambivalence is also seen in media discourses on Proposition 187 where arguments on both sides of the proposition constructed immigrants as diseased. Discourses against California Proposition 187 argued that passing of the proposition would pose a general health threat to the greater populace. Ono and Sloop (2002) show that arguments presented immigrants through metaphors like pollution, infection, infestation or through a disease metaphor, which does not construct immigrants as useful members of society who deserve benefits of membership. Though the anti-proposition stance was intended to stop a proposition that would deny health care to the undocumented immigrants, the opponents also created a negative imagery by arguing that if health care is denied, undocumented immigrants as carriers of diseases will become a health risk to all U.S. citizens. Such arguments constructed undocumented immigrants as diseased bodies and also reasoned that if undocumented immigrants were left untreated the situation will not only aggravate but will also pose an increased health risk to citizens who might come in contact with the untreated carrier of diseases. Though anti-proposition arguments were seemingly positive, Ono and Sloop (2002) show that arguments on either side of the proposition assign little importance to the undocumented immigrants, instead, the immigrants are objectified as bodies asserting the threat posed to "us and our children" (Ono & Sloop, 2002, p. 34). Such representation of immigrants not only invokes fear but also suppresses positive attitude towards them. Flores (2003) notes this attribution of disease is specific to certain immigrant groups such as Mexicans and does not mention the role played by other immigrants (European immigrants) in bringing numerous other diseases. Therefore, such representations further create distinction between citizens, wanted immigrants and unwanted immigrants.

Ambivalence is also present in media discourse on Proposition 187 that constructs immigrants as criminals. Undocumented immigrants are portrayed as criminals either because
they fail to gain proper citizenship or because they are prone to take part in illegal activities such as gang violence if they are not allowed in schools or cannot find employment (Ono & Sloop, 2002). Media discourse shows that arguments both for and against Proposition 187 use arguments that assume undocumented immigrants as prone to criminality. In arguments for Proposition 187, undocumented immigrants are represented as illegal as they have broken laws by entering the U.S. and as immoral as they have cut in front of others to do so. Building on the dominant ideology of morality, the arguments note that undocumented immigrants do not come to assimilate or contribute to the society instead as they break the law it would be immoral to subsidize them. Apparent positive arguments against the Proposition contend that if the proposition passes undocumented immigrants will be out of school. However, such arguments are also tagged with negative trope that asserts that without public education the undocumented immigrants are more prone to engage in violence and criminality as they are criminals by nature. This argument notes a causal relation between Proposition 187 and crime, suggesting that undocumented immigrants will certainly take to criminal behaviors if the proposition passes. The argument is based on the assumption that public education stops the undocumented immigrant kids from being criminals and as the passage of the proposition will take the kids out of school they will be more prone to criminal activities and violence. Thus arguments both for and against Proposition 187 assume undocumented immigrants are prone to criminality. Similar to economic unit these arguments also use the "us' vs "them" binary where arguments both for and against the Proposition 187 pose undocumented immigrants as either potentially or already criminals and thereby threat to citizens. As Ono and Sloop explain this argument calls for stricter immigration reforms and expulsion of the undocumented immigrants as they are constructed as threat to the nation and its people.
Despite the presentation of laborer as desirable, the construction of undocumented immigrant as a threat and diseased counters the desirable argument and such ambivalent representation function together to construct a "racial logic that fears invasion of the self by foreigners" (Ono & Sloop, 2002, p. 41). Further, such representations show that collectively discourse creates distance between citizens and documented immigrants from those who are not, thus producing an environment of an invasive fear of the other.

As noted earlier media representation of immigration and immigrants has predominantly been studied from the perspective of mainstream media. Amaya (2013) argues that mainstream media participate in acts of silencing and pushing away specific ethnic groups from rights. In light of the existing claims regarding media representation, the question remains what happens in non-mainstream (ethnic) media. The next section will situate the project and the research question guiding the project.

**Situating the Project and Research Questions**

This project seeks to understand the discursive strategies used by Asian Indian ethnic newspapers to constitute immigration and immigrants and how the logics of discourse might potentially re-constitute or challenge dominant ideology of nation, citizenship, and immigration.

Race has been central to the definition of the nation, its "people," and its "others." Balibar (1991) argues that race serves as a structuring principle for national processes, defining the boundaries of the nation, and the constituents of national identity. Like race, citizenship and its correlate national borders are similar structures of power, as citizenship structures the realities of those who are considered to be included and those not. However, race itself is a malleable category, which is invoked and enacted differently in different regions and contexts. The heterogeneous interests within the Asian Indian community often complicate the black-white
framework of race relations. Within the community place taking politics argue for nation-based citizenship, while space makers "construct a transnational complex of rights to contend with the daily power of borders in the lives of immigrants" (Das Gupta, 2006, p. 256). However, space-making politics do not replace place-taking politics or political enactments of national identity, instead place-taking and space-making politics operate concurrently in tension with each other. These two types of politics reflect contrary interests and social locations, which challenges the perceived notion of a politically united community. Given this prominent tension with the Asian Indian immigrant community, this study examines the discourses of immigration, citizenship, and addresses how they re-constitute or challenge the definition of the U.S. national imagery. The goal of this project is to identify and articulate the ways in which, and under what conditions, these concepts are related or rejected in the discursive representation of immigration in Asian Indian news discourse.

Critical studies on media argue that media discourses reproduce and sustain ideologies and provide people with knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies, both of the elites and of ordinary citizens (Fairclough, 1995; Ono & Sloop, 2002; van Dijk, 1991). Mainstream media portray immigrants in negative term, where Mexican immigrants are presented as problem (Cisneros, 2008; Flores, 2003; Grimm & Andsager, 2011; Kim, Jung, & Ball-Rokeach, 2006; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Stewart, Pitts & Osborne, 2011). Such studies portray how dominant ideologies are recreated and sustained through media discourses. In case of ethnic media scholars argue that though they might function against mainstream injustice and advocate for minority rights in certain cases they may adopt dominant ideologies in order to safeguard the positionality of their ethnic group within the mainstream framework (Molina Guzman, 2006; Lin & Song, 2006; Matsaganis et al., 2011; Shi, 2009; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). To analyze ideologies embedded
in texts, critical interrogation requires drawing out the implications of texts, exploring the underlying assumptions, examining inferences, and making visible the values, and beliefs that have shaped the discursive choices. In order to understand how an ethnic media discourse constructs immigration and immigrants, it is necessary to identify how it connects to other discourses. This is because as Weiss and Wodak (2003) note discourse functions by relating to other discourses and by relating to the social and historical conditions of its production. Thus understanding how social and political issues, such as immigration debate are recontextualized in ethnic media discourses it is necessary to identify the conflicting positions and ideologies that constitute such discourses.

In the U.S. the continued preference of national security above the protection of civil rights shows how these measures are executed for the required protection of the U.S. residents (citizens or not) at the expense of immigrants (Das Gupta, 2006; Goldberg, 2006). Accounting for the ideological differences within the Asian Indian community this project questions how the struggle over federal level legislation is recontextualized in ethnic newspaper discourses. To this end, this dissertation addresses the following question.

**RQ.** What discursive strategies and logics are used to constitute immigration and immigrants in Asian Indian ethnic news discourse?

**Outline of the Dissertation**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework for the study of how Asian Indian ethnic newspapers represent national immigration reforms, who they represent as deserving reforms, and how they position themselves and other immigrants in relation to the reforms. The chapter grounded the framework in an overview of the ethnic media literature, the logics of discourses, followed by a discussion of Asian Indian immigrants. Next, it presents the theories of nation,
race, and citizenship. Finally, it discusses media representation of immigrants that informed the dissertation and situated the project within the theoretical perspectives. The next chapter provides a detailed account of the methodology that informs this work. Chapter 2 specifies how the data were collected and analyzed and presents the researcher’s self-reflexivity human instrument. Chapters 3 and 4 analyze how the ethnic newspapers represent the national immigration reforms debate. Chapters 3 specifically focuses on how the news discourse constructed the image of deserving immigrants, specifically noting who are the ideal claimants of reforms. The chapter presents three different discourse they were utilized in the construction of deserving immigrants. Chapter 4 analyzes the arguments for reform presented in the editorials, opinion columns, and letters to the editors published in the four studied newspapers. The chapter shows similar to news articles similar and contending logics were also used to present pro-reform arguments in these other forms of presentation in the newspapers. Last, the chapter analyzes how the different logics were presented to construct the dominant discourses in the newspapers. It also presents theoretical claims based on the findings narrated in Chapters 3 and 4. Finally, the chapter presents possible direction for future studies and presents the researcher’s post study self-reflexivity.
CHAPTER 2
METHODS

In this chapter, I describe the method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which is appropriate to answer the proposed research question. The research question addresses the representation of immigration and immigrants in Asian Indian ethnic newspapers specifically questioning the logics used as the National Immigration reform debates are recontextualized in the news discourses. CDA is the most appropriate method as it considers language as constitutive of social reality and meaning as arising from articulations and disarticulations of elements in texts rooted in intertextual and sociopolitical contexts (Fairclough, 1995, 2006). As such CDA will help to uncover how discursive practices maintain power relations between the dominant group, minorities, and other immigrant groups. It will also help me to engage in a critical analysis of how meanings are constituted in the texts and interrogate the ideology that influences intergroup relations. Further, such approach will facilitate uncovering structural relations of domination, discrimination, power, and regulation expressed in the language of the media texts.

In the most general sense CDA, like other forms of discourse analysis, includes deconstructing the meanings in the text. Gee (2004) explains that discourse analysis is an examination of the form, function, meaning, context, identity, power, social practices, sign, connections, which are linked together in a discourse. In other words, "discourse analysis aims at the deconstruction of the structures that are taken for granted and attempts to show that the given organization of the world is the result of political processes and social consequences" (Philips & Jorgensen, 2002, p. 48). Discourse can be described as arrangements of meaning that shape the world we live. They are conceived to be always political as they reflect social goods and power. Extant scholarship on discourse posits that knowledge is produced by discourse (Foucault, 1972,
1977, 1980; Fairclough, 1992, 1995; 2003; van Dijk, 1988, 2003). Such scholars note that discourse produces knowledge through naming, editing conflicting idea, presenting capitalized ideas as natural, ahistorical and necessary, setting dichotomies, and by promoting particular interpretations. Essentially, discourse produces and alters knowledge, identities, and social relations, as well as power relations. Discourse perspectives vary as they vary in the degree to which they retain a measure of insistence on non-discursive structural givens, or can view discourse as explicating social reality. They can also vary in the degree to which they theorize and prioritize human agency and in respect to the role that situated language plays in research and in the methods used to get at the meaning in the texts (Weiss & Wodak, 2002).

In any research, the ontology, epistemology, and methodology need to be congruent, and it is necessary for a researcher to situate himself/herself clearly within the terrain of the research paradigm, however, this does not exclude the possibility of using concepts or analytical tools from various schools or even from outside the field (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Jorgenson and Philips (2002) assert that in discourse analysis use of different perspective is not only permissible but positively valued. They argue that distinctive perceptions provide different forms of knowledge about a phenomenon, this as such collectively generates a broader understanding. Gee (2004) reiterates that discourse analysis is not a rigid method but offers a wide range of concepts and strategies such as Fairclough's discourse and style, Foucault’s governmentality or counter stories and concepts such as intertextuality, etc and van Dijk's approach constituting social functions, cognitive structures, and discursive expression and production (1988). Therefore, in this section, first, I discuss the analytical framework and concepts that I employ and then, I explain the data collection method.
Analytical Frameworks

To investigate the competing discourses on national immigration reform produced by the ethnic newspapers, I utilize Ono and Sloop's (2002) framework, which positions discourses in relation to other discourse and help to understand whether they reinforce or challenge dominant cultural logics. The authors suggest that this intersection form a "grid of intelligibility" (p. 12) that guide decisions concerning which discourses to investigate, make meanings of discourses and state the goals for these investigations. Ono and Sloop (2002) label their work as a "purposeful poststructural critical rhetoric" that engages cultural and rhetorical studies to study the politics of cultural discourse. They specify that their concepts are tools of criticism rather than objective categories into which given discourses fit perfectly. Further, as the authors caution the grid-like nature of the categories of discourse should not be perceived as binary, nor should they be considered as means of categorization, rather they should be taken as tools to help understand the dynamic and shifting relations among discourses.

While presenting the theoretical rationale for critical rhetoric Mckerrow (1989) specified eight principles, which he argues taken together would help the researcher in their critique. The principles formulate ideology critique as a transformative practice instead of a method, and identify that “an ideology exists in a material sense” (Mckerrow, 1989, p. 102) in and through the language that constitutes it. The principles also argue that a rhetoric constitutes doxastic knowledge (not epistemic) and point out that naming is the central symbolic act of a nominalistic rhetoric. The principles further orient critique to account rhetoric as influential (in contrast to causal) and to identify the importance of both absence and presence in evaluating (understanding) symbolic action. Additionally, the principles contend to recognize the possibility of polysemic rather than monosemic interpretation and to understand that criticism is a
performance. Reflecting on McKerrow’s critical rhetoric, Barbara Biesecker (1989) argued that critical rhetoric has a risk of getting stuck in the dialectic binary between hegemonic and oppressed. Also, Dana Cloud (1994) contended that critical rhetoric has the possibility of being trapped in idealism and relativism if poststructuralist scholars replace Marxist dialectics as the basis of criticism. This is because by describing rhetoric as doxa it ignores the real material condition that rises and results from that discourse.

Utilizing critical rhetoric Ono and Sloop's analysis seeks to understand how the “border” is constructed in relation to the nation. In my study, their framework provides the ground for understanding the positioning and functioning of competing logics that guide the representation of citizenship and immigration in ethnic media discourses. However, I use the tools of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyze competing discourses instead of Ono and Sloop's pursued method of rhetorical criticism. CDA is compatible with critical rhetorical paradigmatic orientation. This is because both CDA and critical rhetoric seek to pick up fragments from the ongoing struggle over meanings and deconstruct them. First and foremost, both approaches consider the importance of grounding a broad contextual base that takes into account the micro/macro perspective in a detailed textual analysis. However, it should be noted that although rhetoric considers the macro/micro dualism, it often fails to do so systematically or thoroughly (Huckin, Andrus & Clary-Lemon, 2012). Second, both approaches are concerned with matters of social justice and the misuse of power. Although political and ethical apprehension is present in rhetoric criticism, CDA utilizes a number of text-analytic concepts, such as recontextualization, reformulation, intertextuality, interdiscursivity, textual silences, rich features, foregrounding/backgrounding, synthetic personalization, verb modality, and figured worlds. Finally, a significant difference between CDA and rhetorical criticism is that rhetorical
criticism utilizes the critique to persuade policy or social change, whereas though CDA aims to bring social transformation by targeting the power elites that sustain inequality and injustice it does not necessarily aim to persuade. The next section will lay out the details of critical discourse analysis.

An Overview of Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA provides a systematic method of analyzing media texts that assume that the discourse logics are connected to the existing social, historical, and cultural assumptions about "race," "nation" and "citizenship." CDA also helps to uncover the inherent arguments and implications in texts, which tend to disregard non-dominant groups (in this case, immigrants and other minorities), while justifying the values, beliefs, and ideologies of dominant groups. There are different ways of doing CDA, and they may be theoretically and analytically diverse. Fairclough and van Dijk have been most prominent among CDA scholars who apply CDA to media discourse. CDA also expands Foucault's (1972, 1977, 1980) attempt to unravel power relations. As Fairclough (2003) notes this is done by investigating the dialectical relationships between "discourse …and other elements of social practice" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 205) and detecting the power in and over discourse in a historical, socio-cultural, and political context. This makes CDA politically committed to social change and thereby compatible with the need for intercultural communication research to be more politically charged and engaged in order to identify interests served and the limits/exclusionary practices. For this project, I will use Fairclough's CDA as developed by Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 2003) and other scholars (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Weiss & Wodak, 2002). I will also borrow from van Dijk’s CDA and his theorization of elite discourse and forms of racist discourse to construct a method capable of addressing discourse on race, citizenship, and nation. Philips and Jorgensen
(2002) note the possibility of using concepts or analytical tools from various schools of discourse analysis, or even from outside the field. They assert that "such multiperspectival work is not only permissible but positively valued in most forms of discourse analysis" (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002, p. 4). This is because diverse viewpoints provide different kinds of knowledge about a phenomenon so that, together, they yield a broader understanding. Therefore, this multiperspectival work would be particularly helpful to understand if dominant ideologies of race are interwoven in the Asian Indian newspapers' representation of national immigration debate. In the next section, I will broadly summarize the works of critical discourse analysis scholars, notably the works of Foucault (1967, 1972, 1994, 1996), Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2003), and van Dijk (1988, 1998, 2004, 2005) and then situate my study.

**CDA: Foucault**

According to Foucault's discourse analysis considers that though the language is important it has less importance than the rules that regulate its usage and the power/knowledge systems that manage the entire social order. Foucault in his description of objects, enunciative modalities, concepts, and strategies notes that the rules will differ discursively and are susceptible to major shifts, discontinuities, and disagreements that disrupt continuity or progression. Foucault’s archaeological studies (1967, 1972, 1994) highlights the study of rules that regulate the discourse of everyday non-discursive practices and formal disciplines. Scheurich and McKenzie (2005) describe that archaeology centers on recognized knowledge like scientific theories and statements (prevalent within academia), and the common discursive situations from which formal knowledge develops. He uses these four descriptive categories: objects, subjects, concepts, and strategies, to methodically investigate the discursive formations. The aspect of 'object' describes how through discursive practices objects emerge, which further
affect or is influenced by other discursive practices. The concept of subject explains that subject positions are not separate from the discourse; rather it is a function of the position from which it is observed. The notion of concept is conceptualized as, discursive formations that are fluid in nature. Finally, strategies are theories that help to organize the concepts. Despite criticism of his earlier archaeological works, Fairclough (1992) asserts that Foucault's discourse analysis methods are systematic. Foucault's genealogy has been described as his strength in terms of social analysis. Foucault’s genealogy shows how objects are constructed, specifically objects of knowledge, through institutional practices. Unlike his earlier archaeological works, in his genealogy he does not simply study systems of knowledge and truth, rather he views discourse and discursive systems as means in systems of power. He describes power as an element in that one encounters daily and he asserts that the technologies through which these are produced are hidden and embedded within discourses. He specifies that a genealogist then analyzes the discursive practices, for things that are written, spoken, and quieted and their substantial effects to expose the power system. In this way, he describes that using genealogy a discourse analyst questions power constitutions and their systems, exposes how objects of knowledge are established through discourse, attends to those discursive practices that pushes certain non-conforming viewpoints and knowledges to the margins, and describes the ruptures and breaks in institutional and social practices that are perceived as normal or considered common sense (Sternod, 2008). Next, I will explain Fairclough's CDA in detail and then discuss van Dijk’ theorization of CDA.

**CDA: Fairclough**

Fairclough's model is influenced by the post-structuralist scholarship of Foucault as well as other social theorists such as Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, and Jurgen Habermas and
literary theorists such as Michael Halliday, and Mikhail Bakhtin (Fairclough, 1992; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Fairclough's discourse analysis employs both linguistic and social analysis. Fairclough’s method examines discursive relationships and social systems in three separate domains, local, institutional, and societal. Fairclough argues that these domains do not exist distinctly or individually as each domain constantly interacts with the others. Further, he points out the existence of dialectical relationships within elements that constitute social practices. These elements are semiotic or language-based constituents and non-semiotic constituents such as social relationships, individual beliefs, attitudes, history, and the material world. Fairclough (1992) contends that to make new meanings both semiotic and non-semiotic social elements need reconfiguration.

I chose Fairclough's CDA because it provides a theory-method connection to understand everyday life and language use and the social dynamics. As I paradigmatically situate myself within critical intercultural communication, I chose Fairclough's CDA as it extends critical theory by understanding how people are positioned in discourses and how people socially constitute the meanings of objects and subjects by producing and consuming language in spoken and written form. Therefore, critical discourse analysis investigates the relations amongst the usage of language and the social, historical, and political contexts in which it occurs, and how language is used in social interactions and impacts social relations and practices.

Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2003) defines discourse as an important form of social practice that constitutes knowledge about a particular topic at a given point in history. He specifies that through language in speech and text or images and sounds, discourses not only shape or reshape social structures they are also formed, by institutions, situations, and structures. Basically, discourse replicates as well as alters knowledge, identities, and social relations, including power
relations. He specifies that the goal of CDA is to bring together social theory and discourse analysis in order to describe, interpret, and explain the ways in which discourse constructs, becomes constructed by, represents, as well as becomes signified by the social world. Therefore, Fairclough’s (1989, 1992) approach to CDA focuses on the position of language and discourse in sociopolitical power and the processes of social change. Further, Fairclough’s CDA emphasizes analysis of meanings because it views language as constitutive of the social reality in which it is being used and informs us of the ways meanings depend on the structure of connections and disconnections between social relations that discourses establish (Fairclough, 1995). Fairclough contends discourse as not only one of the many aspects of any social practice and also distinguishes between discursive and non-discursive practices (Phillips and Jorgensen, 2002). Discursive practices include action, interaction, social relations, rituals, beliefs, attitudes, values, and desires of people and institutions (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 28) whereas a non-discursive practice includes physical practice.

Fairclough claims that language in use both shapes and is shaped by social forces. According to Fairclough (1995), CDA treats language as one type of social practice among many, used for representation and signification (including visual images, music, gestures, etc.), where texts are produced by socially situated speakers and writers. He notes that "language is an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life, so that social analysis and research always has to take into account language" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2). Further, as language presents a description of structures, events, social practices, social networks, and associations among people, among institutions, and between institutions and people, it provides us insights into the discourse. Fairclough employs detailed text analysis to gain insight into how discursive processes operate linguistically in specific texts.
Second, discourse is both constitutive and constituted. Therefore, discourse not only shapes and reshapes social structures but also reflects them. In other words, discourse can be viewed as socially constitutive of and also by objects, subjects, processes, events and phenomena. As Fairclough and Wodak (1997) notes it helps to sustain and reproduce the "social status quo...and contributes to transforming it" (p. 258). Therefore, as Phillips and Jorgensen (2002) observe, "discourse is in a dialectical relationship with other social dimensions" (p. 61).

Further, Fairclough (1995a) specifies that the production of ideology is a crucial part of CDA. Ideology, for Fairclough (1995a), is "meanings in the service of power" (p. 14), which indicates that ideology is the construction of meaning that contributes to the production, reproduction, and transformation of relations of domination (Fairclough, 1992; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Fairclough contends that discourses can be more or less ideological, and these discourses specifically contribute to the maintenance and transformation of power relations.

Additionally, Fairclough argues that texts have several meanings that may contradict each other, and are open to several diverse interpretations. In other words, people can be positioned within dissimilar and competing ideologies. This explains how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies and discourse’s constructive effects upon social identities, social relations, and systems of knowledge and beliefs.

Now that I have detailed Fairclough's CDA in the next section, I talk about van Dijk's CDA and his theorization of elite discourse.

**CDA: van Dijk**

According to van Dijk discourse analysis examines the relationship between language use, cognition, and the interaction in their socio-cultural contexts by focusing exclusively on naturally occurring talk and text (van Dijk, 1997). van Dijk (2001) describes CDA as an
approach in discourse analysis, which claims that discourse is not only a container and carrier of ideologies but is also a social action on its own. He further states that CDA is socially and politically committed and thereby it is essential to account for the links between its detailed textual linguistic analyses and various levels of socio-political contexts affecting the process of production, distribution and interpretation of language. Among the other approaches to critical discourse analysis, van Dijk’s (1988) CDA is specifically concerned with studying and analyzing written texts and spoken words to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias. Further, it is concerned with how these sources are initiated, maintained, reproduced, and transformed within specific social, economic, political, and historical contexts.

van Dijk (1988a) devised a theoretical framework that critically relates discourse, cognition, and society. Social interaction takes place within social structures and is presented in the form of text/discourse, which is then internalized according to a cognitive system/memory. This system/memory consists of short-term memory in which strategic process, or decoding and interpretation, take place. Long-term memory, however, serves as a holder of socio-cultural knowledge, which consists of knowledge of the language, discourse, communication, persons, groups, and events existing in the form of scripts. The three main components of van Dijk’s theory, therefore, are social functions, cognitive structures, and discursive expression and production (1988), which bridge the gap between macro and micro levels of analysis. van Dijk has significant contribution in identifying the interrelation between mass media and discourse. In discussing mass media van Dijk (2005) emphasizes the vital role of discourse and mass media as they not only disseminate ideologies but also re/construct and re/create attitudes and knowledge in the minds of people at large. Further, van Dijk (1987) also proposed a systematized relation between discourse and ideology. He describes that the link between ideology and discourse is
filled with certain linguistic encoding/decoding which creates a cycle of input and output in proliferating an ideology. van Dijk explains that a CDA study, therefore, not only tries to deconstruct the encoding processes of the cycle, to throw light on what discursive mechanisms are adopted in the realization of an ideology in discourse, it also tries to explain how such loaded discourse is decoded (interpreted) in the minds of people to create or reinforce certain ideologies. For this project, I will utilize van Dijk's framework to understand the discursive mechanism in order to identify the underlying logics that guide representation of immigration and immigrants in ethnic media discourses.

Another important dimension of van Dijk's framework is his theorization of elite discourse. According to van Dijk (1990), elite discourse is produced and reproduced by certain group members and institutions in the everyday context to express and confirm their dominance. He defines dominance as the exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups that result in social inequality. He specifies that such discourses are also often perpetuated through media portrayal of the 'other.' Further, he describes that elites initiate, monitor, and control the majority and most influential forms of institutional and public text and talk as they have preferential access to the mass media. Therefore, he notes that mediated discourses are a form of social power as access to and control over news discourse is not equal to all groups and individuals in society. Thereby these discursive resources are better able than other social groups to influence interpretations and social beliefs and to marginalize or suppress alternatives that are against their interests. I will also borrow from van Dijk’s theorization of elite discourse in order to uncover the implicit arguments and meanings in texts, which tend to marginalize non-dominant groups while justifying the values, beliefs, and ideologies of dominant groups.
van Dijk’s (1988) CDA on mediated discourses helps to understand organized power dynamics. In his later works on discourse and racism, he explains (van Dijk, 1993) that CDA reveals the role of discourse in the reproduction and challenge of dominance. He argues that CDA is particularly appropriate to understand the underlying ideologies that construct media discourses. van Dijk’s CDA therefore provides a rich model for qualitative analysis of news discourse as it notes the various structures and strategies. His analysis emphasizes paying attention to news topics, the source of quotes, positioning of quotes, lexicalization or word choice, active or passive phrasing that represents agency or indifference of story subjects and overall logic. As van Dijk (1991) notes all of these features should be analyzed to get a better representation of how news discourse functions to depict social issues. For example, in his examination of news discourse in Netherland he found that minorities are less quoted less, given less prominence in compared to the (white) elites, implicit references were used rather than explicitly racist language, and that active and passive language structures are used to reproduce the relegation of minorities by blaming the responsibility for their inability onto minorities and instead of accusing the practices of the dominant culture (van Dijk, 1991).

Although van Dijk and Fairclough’s forms of CDA have certain things in common, they are different in how they view the nature of the importance of mediation. For van Dijk, cognitive structures, and mental models are mediated between discourse and society. For Fairclough, it is through discourse practices that the texts are produced and received (Bell & Garrett, 1998). Critical scholars who engage in media discourse analysis contend that discourses reproduce and sustain ideologies and provide people with knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies, both for the elites and ordinary citizens (Hall, 1977, 1980; van Dijk, 1991, Fairclough, 1995). Therefore, analyzing discourse becomes crucial in order to uncover the power systems hidden in discourses.
Among the existing communication scholarship that has applied CDA, a few have built on van Dijk's work on analyzing media discourses or have used van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach to understanding notions of prejudice, ideology, power and various sources of legitimation, others have used Fairclough's linguistic analysis and a few others have used Foucault's genealogy to understand construction of citizenship and nationhood in public discourses (Amaya, 2007; Charteris-Black, 2006; Chavez, 2009, DeChaine, 2009; Gales, 2009; KhosravaNik, 2005, 2010; Munshi, 1998; Polson & Kahle, 2010).

In the above discussion of the different contemporary approaches to CDA, I situate myself as a scholar following Fairclough's three-dimensional model and van Dijk's form of CDA, focusing on the relationship of power and discourse. van Dijk's theorization of elite discourse fit with Fairclough's three-dimensional model. As mentioned earlier, though both approaches are different, as van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach understands cognitive structures as mediating social practices (which I do not employ in my study), nevertheless both approaches are text oriented. In other words, both systematically analyze discourse as constitutive of knowledge, subjects and social relations and would thereby be effective in uncovering how different groups are situated and how structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control are manifested in the language of the media texts and how through discursive mechanism meanings are constituted, power relations maintained, and ideologies and oppressions are enabled and constrained. In the next section, I will lay out in detail the data collection procedures.

**Data Collection**

I selected four English language newspaper published in the US for my critical discourse analysis. The guiding research question of this project inquires the underlying logics that
constructed the arguments for/against immigration reform and constituted the representation of immigrants in the four different ethnic newspapers, *India Abroad* (IA), *India West* (IW), *India Post* (IP), and *India Bulletin* (IB). I searched each of the newspaper's online archives with keyword including immigration reform, Mexican, Hispanic and border. I used each of these keywords individually and then I used several combinations of key words in order to make the search of articles as extensive as possible. For example, I used “Immigration reform” and “Mexican/Hispanic/border,” and I used “wild card searches,” in other words a search Lati** and/or immigra**.” My data included news stories, opinion columns, editorials and letters to the editor published in these four Asian Indian newspaper on immigration reforms over a period of 2 years. Now, I’ll briefly discuss the newspapers that I have chosen for my study.

**Sample**

At present there are seven English language Asian Indian print newspapers that are published in the U.S. In order to get a representative sample, I selected the most widely circulated publication from four different geographic areas. The sample will consist of news articles written by the newspaper’s journalists and not from wired services. This is to make sure that the collected data shows specifically how immigrants and immigration are constructed in the ethnic newspapers, thereby revealing the ideology used in such construction.

*India Abroad*

*India Abroad* is the oldest Asian Indian publication in North America. It was established in 1970, by Asian Indian publisher Gopal Raju. Since then, *India Abroad* has become an important part of the life of Asian Indians, as it continues to enjoy their generous support and trust (“Allied-media,” n.d.). *India Abroad* has its headquarter in New York city, however, it is printed and circulated throughout the United States and Canada. Additionally, it should be noted that the
newspaper is published with an emphasis on the New York City metro area as well as select pockets of affluent Asian Indian communities in major cities. In 2008, Raju sold India Abroad to Rediff.com an Indian news portal, which as of 2009 own and operates the paper (The Hindu, 2008). Additionally, India Abroad is circulated to the prosperous and upscale Asian Indian market through a combined system of paid subscriptions, newsstand sales, and complimentary copies, further ensuring a total penetration into the marketplace. According to Allied Media (n.d.) India Abroad is ABC audited and claims itself as successful based on its effective and targeted reader response.

**India Bulletin**

Launched in 2004, India Bulletin is the largest circulated and most read Indian newspaper in the Midwest. Particularly, India Bulletin is the largest and most read Indian newspaper in the Chicago area as a result of its unwavering attention to quality, creativity, and professionalism. The newspaper claims that it works in collaboration with renowned global news services to bring current non-partisan news and photos to their readers (India Bulletin, n.d.). India Bulletin is available for free to over 450 locations including all major South Asian grocery stores, produce markets, video stores, restaurants, clothing and jewelry boutiques, bookstores, libraries, temples, professional offices, doctor clinics, dentist offices, newsstands, government offices and community events including concerts, parades, religious organization programs, music and fashion shows, fundraisers and other events that appeal to the South Asian population (Things Indian, n.d.). In addition, India Bulletin is also mailed to subscribers and for free to professionals and businesses throughout Illinois, making it the one and only newspaper published in Chicago that does both mailing and distribution. India Bulletin claims that their circulation is incomparable to any other publication available in the Midwest (Indian, Bulletin, n.d.).
India West

India West the largest and most prestigious among weekly Indian newspapers on the West Coast of U.S., was established in 1975 (Things Indian, n.d.). The newspaper claims that its readers are among the nation's single most prosperous and well educated immigrant group (Asian Indian Americans) (About India West, n.d). The Asian Indian American population is currently approaching three million in the United States (U.S. Census, 2010), and the communities view India-West as an essential part of their life for news, opinion, events, and entertainment (“Allied-Media,” n.d.). India-West offers exclusive unique content (India West, n.d.), where the publication claims that they are the first of its kind web portal that is designed to be a primary source of news and information for the entire Asian Indian community in the U.S. It not only does it provides news, but also delivers a various other information ranging from subjects such as Weddings, Real Estate, Job Opportunities, to Film Reviews, Event Listings, Matrimonials, Recipes, and others. It also publishes blogs from eminent writers, has Live Channels section containing videos of talented Indians, and also an e-commerce section for Hot Deals from merchants. The newspaper claims that it is the primary go-to source website for all things pertaining to the global Indian community. The website is currently ranked highest among websites of Indian American newspapers by Alexa (n.d.) a commercial California-based company that provides commercial web traffic data and analytics.

India Post

Established on July 4, 1994, India Post was founded by prominent Asian Indian American cardiologist and community leader Romesh Japra. The newspaper was published with the intention of empowering the Indian Diaspora and making their voice strong and effective in their adopted country (India Things, n.d.). During the first 14 years of its existence. India Post newsweekly has
emerged as the fastest growing Indian-American newspaper (India Post, n.d.). The independent media auditors Circulation Verification Council (n.d.) has certified India Post's readership at 132,177 and called it the fastest growing Asian Indian-American weekly that tallies on readership and 100% owned by the receiver at par with the top 20% of mainstream newspapers. Apart from people of Indian origin living in America and Canada, the newspaper also covers people of Indian heritage from other parts of the world such as Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago and Africa (India Post, n.d.).

Data

Data search found three significant spike period in the four newspapers. KhoshraviNik (2009) demonstrated that spikes are significant for discourse analysis, specifically in the context of relevant socio-political events. This is because they show an increased attention to the issues and exhibit how existing discourses are reshaped and reified. My data analysis revealed the first spike was from end-November 2014 to mid-January 2015. It should be noted that on November 20, 2014, President Obama announced a series of executive immigration actions, such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Actions for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA). These executive actions were to tackle illegal immigration, deport criminals, require undocumented immigrants to go through a criminal background check and pay taxes so that they can temporarily stay in the U.S. without the fear of deportation (dhs.gov, 2014, November 20). The second spike was noted between end February 2015 and end March 2015. Notably, an immigration act was proposed in late February 2015 to grant employment authorization for dependent spouses of H-1B nonimmigrants who wish to remain in the US permanently (uscis.gov, 2015, February 24). Final spike was noticed in November 2015, during the time commemorating the anniversary of President Obama’s announcement of the DACA and
DAPA initiative. I selected news articles that originated locally in the ethnic newspapers, letters to the editor, editorials and opinion columns and excluded reprints from national newspapers and wire services. The final data set comprised of 289 news article; 142 from the India Abroad, 72 from the India West, 43 from the India Post, and 32 from the India Bulletin. The data set also included 15 editorials, 28 opinion columns and 42 letters to the editor that was published in the four newspaper.

**Analysis technique**

The data or texts under study include hard news, editorials, and letters to the editors published in the noted four ethnic newspapers. To analyze my data, I used both Fairclough’s and van Dijk’s form of CDA. I applied Fairclough’s (1991, 1992) critical discourse analysis, through critical readings of texts, specifically noting the meaning constructed in the texts. I conducted this by focusing on language use, specifically by identifying how arguments pro and against the immigration reform were represented, what words or phrases were used to construct immigrants and what notions of citizenship were developed and presented as rightful. I also examined syntax, textual organization and structure by identifying what information was placed in headlines and lead paragraphs, and what was foregrounded or backgrounded. In order to comprehend the implications of these news discourses, I relied on historical information, scholarly works, and my analytical instinctive knowledge. I also employed van Dijk’s (1992) analytical set of elite racism strategies to understand how the discourse constructed immigrants and immigration. Finally, I worked with Ono and Sloop’s (2002) critical insights about the logics and dynamics of discourse.

Fairclough’s three-dimensional model serves as an analytical framework for research on communication and society (Gales, 2009; Munshi, 1998). Following Fairclough’s three-
dimensional model, the data from the newspapers were specifically analyzed at three different levels: (1) Examination of the language or text, (2) the discursive practices, that is involved in the production and consumption of the texts, and (3) the analysis of socio-political and socio-cultural contexts in which the communicative events occur.

Using the first dimension, the text analysis, I noted the formal features of the text, specifically identifying the contents of text and the language in the text. This helps to identify the discursive content of the text and the links to other discourses, genres, and styles. Fairclough (1995a) refers to this process as intertextuality. This is a form of linguistic analysis whereby the researcher looks at vocabularies, semantics, utterances, and grammar in order to identify representations, construction of subjects, objects, and social positions, how subjects and objects are positioned, and underlying relations of power in the use of language (Fairclough, 1995a). Another form of analysis is identifying interdiscursivity. Interdiscursivity refers to blending of different ideas, texts, and discourse linked to institutional, social meanings and practice. This analysis technique can help identify the often intersecting, opposing, and competing ideologies that shape discursive presentation. Therefore, intertextual and interdiscursive examination of media discourse has the prospective to expose the sometimes intersecting, differing, conflicting, and competing ideologies that shape construction, dissemination, and recontextualization. The notion of recontextualization explicates that the potential meaning of discourses may be repressed or changed by social agents in the process of transmission from one context to another, and consequently the resultant discourses might procure completely new meanings (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Intertextuality will help me to see the association between the macro-level ideology and micro-level ethnic news discourses. The goal of the intertextual and interdiscursive investigation in this study was to map how discourses from dominant ideologies were drawn
from and are interwoven within the ethnic discourses. Fairclough’s three-dimensional analytical framework asserts that language in use and discourse are rooted in power relations. Founded on such notion, intertextuality is therefore conceived as socially constructed resources, used to construct ideology and culture. Therefore, I used this dimension to identify broader themes in the ethnic media discourses, language usage (inclusion and exclusion of words) in those themes, word choices, which words are highlighted and which ones are put in the background.

The second dimension of Fairclough's model is the analysis of the discursive practice level. I used it to analyze the factors that influence the interpretation of an event (immigration reforms) and how this influences the construction, circulation, transformation, of texts. This helped me to identify how different discourses are related, as I examined the relationship between citizenship, race, and nation. Such as, it aided me to investigate whether the ethnic media discourse operates within the logic of the dominant discourse or whether it works outside of the dominant logics to become outlaw discourse.

Fairclough's third dimension is the analysis of social practices. This level includes understanding the wider socio-cultural, political, ideological, and institutional contexts, and structures surrounding the text and their associated discourses. Analyzing the sociocultural practices helped me to take into account the underlying power relations, how they are reproduced, and how they facilitate the exploitation and marginalization of groups. This allowed me to question and challenge the assumptions behind the ways certain groups are perceived, conceived, and positioned within the dominant narratives, the links between race, citizenship and nation and the strategic purposes that are being used in such constitution.

In this study, I also use van Dijk’s (1983, 1988a, 1988b, 1991) CDA to identify how the numbers, words, and phrases or the lexical level of the news content are connected to, and
combined with the larger cultural discourse, social forces, and ideological assumptions. His methodology reveals how the “link” between the ideological context and the dialectal structure of the written texts are expressed in the representation (van Dijk, 1983, 1988a, 1988b).

Therefore, my analysis initially examined how immigration reform is constructed and positioned in the texts. I then worked out how the structuring of the texts was linked to the construction of different representation which was either supportive or critical of the dominant society’s nationalistic schema. In the next section, I will detail about the validity and reliability of my study.

Validity and Reliability

Due to lack in numeric representations, qualitative studies have often been questioned for its validity and reliability (Creswell, 2001). Lather (2001) called for, "going beyond predisposition in our empirical efforts requires techniques that will give confidence in the trustworthiness of data" (p. 352). Consequently, she reconceptualized validity that would be more appropriate for research that is committed to "more just social order" (Lather, 2001, p. 352).

Unlike previous ethnic media studies, this study aims to understand the underlying ideologies that are used to construct representations of immigration and immigrants. Therefore, one of the primary attempts of this study will be to approach triangulation in order to establish data "trustworthiness" (Lather, 2001, p. 352). This study will apply the method of triangulation by adapting "with- in method triangulation" (Denzin, 2001, p. 324) by means of using four different ethnic newspapers located at different geographical local. Data triangulation (Denzin, 2001) by using data from multiple sites will help to understand if geo- ethnic factors play a role in media representation of immigrants and immigration. This is because as Lather (2001)
pointed out triangulation is effective as it helps to identify counter patterns and convergences, which increases the credibility of the data.

Along with “with- in method triangulation I am also implementing theory or perspective triangulation, where I am using multiple theoretical perspectives to examine and interpret the data. Such an approach allows theorist to move between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) note triangulation then is not a strategy of validation but is a strategy that adds “rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth” to the study. As specified previously for this study I develop a multiperspectival analysis, where I combine Ono and Sloop’s (2002) framework, Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis, and van Dijk’s CDA and his theorization of elite discourse. Ono and Sloop’s framework provides a way of analyzing how discourses are related through the concept of the “logics of discourse,” which refers to the reasons, meanings, and arguments that guide the competing discourses. Fairclough’s CDA framework will enable me to question the meanings of the texts, how they are constructed, and how they are connected to the existing social and political assumptions about the issues discussed. van Dijk’s CDA will help to identify the underlying ideologies that guide representation of immigration and immigrants in ethnic media and his theorization of elite discourse will help identify the strategies that are used to marginalize non-dominant group while promoting elite ideologies.

**Researcher Positionality**

Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of the human instrument. Self-reflexivity is vital to the effective use of the human instrument in data collection and critical data analysis. I will now discuss relevant elements of my biography and their importance to this project.
I am a Bengali woman, born and raised in Calcutta, (a bustling cosmopolitan city in eastern part of India) in a middle class, educated family. Both my parents are college graduates and are quite established in their chosen careers. A good education from a reputed school and college has always been a priority for my parents. My privileged middle-class background came with various advantages, namely, I was educated in a private, non-religious, non-race based English school where English was the medium of instruction. Besides education, I have had an easy access to other privileged aspects of social life.

My entry into the United States was through my husband's advanced educational credentials, which immediately placed me at a privileged position in the U.S. structural hierarchy, and consequently, my inclusion into the white structured society was easy. However, after I immigrated to the United States, my first close friends here were a black couple who helped us through the initial period of adjustment. In spite of my advantageous entry, which placed me at a convenient position I encountered discrimination and alienation from the mainstream. Therefore, for my master's project I investigated the lived experiences of Asian Indian immigrants. When I started to study the lived experiences of Asian Indian immigrants, my assumption was that I would hear stories of struggles and "othering" from my participants. Instead through my research, I have found that segments of the Asian Indian immigrant population engage in a form of racial alignment with whiteness, politics of this group.

My relationship with my participants continued during and after the study. Sometimes when I came across a few of them at different places, some would enquire about the progress of my study; others would refer other probable participants, or suggests ideas for possible future studies. In one such incident, after the completion of my study, I met one of my participants in a local grocery store. As he was curious, I shared with him the study findings. Initially, he seemed
upset, but then he asserted that in order to get dissimilar findings, I should interview Indian immigrants employed in low-level jobs, like dishwashers in restaurants, agricultural workers, etc. His reaction and subsequent comment made me contemplate on why the participants' disclose perceptions about themselves and others exhibited their alignment with whiteness. Seeking out, I comprehend, that all my participants who were here for more than fifteen years, had a privileged entry as immigrants and were now placed at a different advantageous position and as a graduate researcher they all saw me as someone similar who is following their footsteps. This association placed me in their inner circle, where I became an associate with whom they could comfortably converse about their insights.

As I delved into the literature and confronted my social status and identity in the U.S. context, the more I realized the similarities between social constructs and their functions within specific social contexts. Moreover, the awareness of power inequality through my interaction with my friends of color and my experiences as an immigrant in the United States helped me understand the grain of race and whiteness in social discourses. The narrative of Asian Indian immigration to the US in communication has been mostly framed within the nationalist framework of assimilation and cultural pluralism. Recent studies outside the field of communication have noted the emergence of distinct (conflicting) needs and interests of the Asian Indian community. This study will delve into identifying the underlying ideologies that constitute the representation of immigrants and immigration in ethnic media discourse.
CHAPTER 3

DESERVING IMMIGRANTS

The news articles published in the four ethnic newspapers, India Abroad, India Bulletin, India Post and India West, supported immigration reform. My analysis of the four newspapers identified competing discourses, such as Economic discourse, Humanistic discourse and Model minority discourse, which presented pro-immigration arguments and constructed the imagery of the immigrants who deserve reform. These news discourses described the rightful claimants of immigration, articulated on what grounds they should be allowed to immigrate, and tactically constructed other immigrants and minorities.

The analysis shows how the discourses apply different, sometimes contending, logics and meanings of belonging and rights in the construction of the deserving immigrant. Ono and Sloop (2002) specify that logics and ideology play a powerful role in creating and shaping public perception. However, it should be noted here that this project differs from other studies on media representation of immigrants, which were typically analysis of mainstream news discourse targeted towards a mainstream audience. My study instead focuses on media representation of immigration reforms in ethnic media, which are specifically targeted towards their own community members, who are heterogeneous in terms of their class, social positionality, and their immigration timeline. Therefore, my analysis adds to the literature of ethnic media by demonstrating how historical contextualization shape logics that are applied by ambiguously positioned immigrants as they contest and struggle with meaning making, specifically as they constitute issues of belonging and ethnic rights.

During the studied period two important changes in immigration were announced, which initiated a considerable spike in the published articles. The first was President Obama’s
announcement of a series of executive actions for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Actions for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) in late November 2014. The second was the immigration act proposed in late February 2015 to grant employment authorization to dependent spouses of H-1B nonimmigrants who wish to remain in the U.S. permanently (uscis.gov, 2015, February 24). This chapter focuses on the discursive construction of the deserving immigrants, specifically inquiring how different groups in the community are positioned in relation to the proposed or prospective immigration reforms. The first discourse shows how the news articles present *Economic discourse* to argue for reform and to construct immigrants as deserving, the second discourse shows the strategic use of a *Humanistic discourse* to construct the image of deserving immigrant, and finally the *Model Minority discourse* shows how Asian Indian immigrants and the other immigrants are constructed as the newspapers envision who deserves immigration reform. The following sections detail the three prominent discourse.

**Economic discourse**

Historically, economic discourse played a vital role in shaping the identity of this immigrant community. Post-1965 Asian Indian immigrants predominantly came in through privileged material terms. Based on their terms of entry and acceptance segments of the population within the community continued to present themselves in material terms and to prefer material terms of acceptance and belonging. However, the continuous flow of immigrants from India, have diversified the community, where segments of the community vary largely based on class, social and material position. This section shows how the ethnic newspapers used economic discourse to present arguments for immigration reform and how they constructed immigrants.
The economic discourse evident in the newspapers presented immigration reform as necessary for the economic progress of the United States and to build its economically strong backbone. The arguments were supported with statements of congressmen, businesspeople, and community elites who emphasized the need for workforce and described immigration reform as vital to business interests. The newspapers made clear distinctions between documented and undocumented immigrants as they presented their pro-reform arguments. Some (about forty percent of the analyzed news articles) argued for reform for the highly educated and skilled immigrants only, giving preference to the privileged segment of the ethnic community who are in the country based on their white collar employment, and such arguments claimed for a pathway to citizenship for these immigrants. Other news articles appealed for reforms for undocumented immigrants by presenting them as a vital workforce for the U.S. agriculture and service industries. Though these articles presented the need to legalize undocumented migrants, the arguments presented reform as economic need and the immigrants were represented exclusively in terms of economic value.

It should be mentioned here that irrespective of the immigrants’ status, and the evident differences in material terms the newspapers in their pro-reform arguments applied capitalistic logics in their representation of immigration reforms. Heilbroner (1985) notes capitalistic logic is a human invention and a product of history and is not a set of natural laws proposed by modern economists. Imposition of the logic of capitalism on any part of the society is succeeded not only through creation and preservation of new capitalist practices but also through suppression and/or cooptation of those opposed to these new practices (Heilbroner, 1985). Guided by capitalistic logic the dominant society legitimates its own actions by arguing that only profitable actions and practices serve society (Heilbroner, 1985). Additionally, scholars note a key element in the
postmodern capitalistic logic is that anything can be constructed as a commodity (Heilbroner, 1985; Jameson, 1991). The following section will detail the logics used in the strategic construction of the deserving immigrant. However, based on the discursive strategies used by the newspapers that widely distinguished undocumented immigrants from documented immigrants in terms of their material position, this section is further categorized into three different sub-sections: Arguments for undocumented immigrants, Arguments for documented immigrants, and Represented voices.

**Arguments for undocumented immigrants**

Some of the news articles published in the newspapers called for reforms for undocumented migrants through an economic need argument. These articles represented perspectives of prominent community stakeholders, who emphasized the need for workforce and described immigration reform as vital to U.S. economic interests. This economic need argument for reforms widely applied capitalistic logic in the construction of undocumented immigrants, where such immigrants were presented as a vital workforce. The newspapers also represented arguments that criticized the present immigration system describing it as not working and broken. Instead, the arguments applauded the proposed DACA and DAPA initiative for undocumented immigrants, specifically, noting the reforms as a prominent step towards getting rid of a system that is holding back economic progress. Notably, arguments for reform on behalf of undocumented immigrants were more prominent in *India Abroad, India Post, and India West.* *India Abroad* published the highest number of news articles arguing for reforms for undocumented immigrants, which featured voices of national elites, community members and elites and organizations working on their behalf. Though pro-reform arguments for undocumented immigrants were also present in the other two newspapers (*India West and India*
Post), the majority of these articles positioned such arguments in the lower portion of the articles after calls for documented migrants. The following paragraphs will detail on the discursive strategies used by the newspapers.

Findings show that the newspapers predominantly used labels like “undocumented” and in a few instance “illegal” to represent undocumented immigrants and to differentiate them from the documented immigrants. It should be noted here that majority of the references to undocumented migrants did not mention any specific ethnic group. Instead, the undocumented immigrants were represented as a homogenized group, without any race, ethnicity or class-based distinction. Only a couple of articles published in India West and India Post presented undocumented immigrants as migrants from Mexico or South and Central Americas. Predominantly, the newspapers represented these migrants as individuals who have overstayed after their visas expired, or came to the U.S. (illegally) to escape the threats in their home country to have a better life. Further, these migrants are represented as belonging to the lower segments of the society, who typically come to work as laborers in the agricultural sector or the service industries. As such, the portrayal of undocumented migrants differed widely from the portrayal of documented immigrants in material terms.

The newspapers covered demonstrations, meetings, proposed executive reform related news stories representing how community leaders’, organizations’ and the larger community argue for reform and how these prominent stakeholders perceive undocumented immigration. The newspapers coverage of these meetings and demonstration predominantly presented interviews and/or perspectives of important community members, who described their opinion about immigration reforms and indicated how the community should deal with proposed or prospective reforms. These represented voices and perspectives of prominent members of the
community emphasized that the U.S. economy will be affected if a pro-reform initiative is not implemented as it will lose the significant “hidden” labor force. Direct quotes or paraphrased representation were used to warn that U.S. agricultural and service industries will suffer (due to labor shortage) if present immigration policies are not reformed. As such these voices and perspectives were represented prominently in headlines, leads and top portions of articles, or were presented along with arguments for documented immigration (portraying a representational balance in the news strategy).

The news articles critiqued the anti-reform and anti-immigration narrative circulating in the mainstream. These news articles described such narratives as “destructive” as they fail to recognize the long-term economic contribution of the immigrants and also label them as “derogatory” as they attack immigrant families. These articles presented elite community voices to support their statement. The direct and indirect quotes representing community members’ voices show how the mainstream rhetoric have generated concern within the Asian Indian community. For example, an article in IA describes the anti-immigration perspective as “economically devastating plans that include impractical mass deportations of the undocumented” and urges the need to recognize the undocumented immigrants’ “long-term contribution” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015, September 25). The article uses labels like “impractical” and “devastating” to describe the anti-immigration narrative. In particular, the article supported such perspective by quoting different Asian Indian American activists who emphasized the need to stop victimizing and representing negatively certain groups of people (undocumented immigrants). These activists were represented as advocating for immigration related issues affecting the Asian Indian community and who speak out against mainstream injustices against immigrants. Another article in IA also presented arguments against mainstream anti-reform and
anti-immigrant rhetoric (Rajendran, 2015, September 25). The article described the concern among the Asian Indian community regarding hateful anti-immigrant narrative. This description was also supported by citing voices of prominent community members, whose resentment regarding negative narrative were represented. However, it should be noted here that as the articles criticize anti-reform narrative and emphasize the need for reform they constructed the argument from an economic perspective, representing how undocumented immigrants are economically valuable to the nation. As noted above segments within the community believe and promote the notion of acceptance through economic contribution, and findings show such logic were presented in the arguments for reforms for the undocumented immigrants.

The news articles in their pro-reform calls for undocumented immigrants utilized an economic need argument. These arguments predominantly used the label “undocumented” (in a few cases “illegal”) along with words such as “backbone,” “engine” “core needs” in their support of immigration reform. Through the usage of such phrases, the arguments emphasized that the U.S. economy is dependent on migrant labor, who are hardworking undocumented immigrants working on farms and doing other menial jobs. For example, an IA article covering an Asian Indian fundraiser for the GOP displayed concern over the anti-immigration rhetoric circulating amongst the Presidential candidates. The article noted that the Asian Indian GOP members supported the undocumented immigrants, as they are “the economic support system” (Haniffa, 2015, September 25). This argument was supported by quoting fundraiser attendee like, business person Peter Kothari, who argued, “Those illegal immigrants are the backbone of the country, (working in) construction, restaurants, and fields, doing jobs Americans don’t want to do. How do you throw them out?” (Haniffa, 2015, September 25). The argument represents undocumented immigrants as valuable laborers. The phrase “backbone of the country” suggests that the
undocumented immigrants are the country’s economic infrastructure (support system) as they are
the productive laborers who work in agricultural and service sectors.

The argument representing undocumented immigrant as the economic backbone, imply
the need for sufficient compensation however the presence of competing economic logic
undermines such requirement. For example, the article also quoted Asian Indian cardiologist
Zachariah who described undocumented immigrants as “poor people” who are “doing jobs no
one else wants to do” (Haniffa, 2015, September 25). The quote presented undocumented
immigrants as vital resources, specifically in the sectors where there is a scarcity of legal U.S.
workers. In another article arguing for reform to support undocumented immigrants, describe
such migrants as those, “who work long hours at low pay doing the hard and dirty jobs” (Mehta,
2015, January 2). Support for immigration reform was strongly articulated in these articles,
where undocumented workers were presented as the support system of the agricultural, service
and manufacturing industry. However, phrases “doing jobs Americans don’t want to do,” or
“doing the hard and dirty jobs” presents the undocumented immigrants as laborers who do hard
work in return for little money. The articles present two competing logic of economic discourse
where one constructs immigrants as deserving adequate compensation whereas the other mark
them as requiring a minimum payment.

The articles constructing a pro-reform argument also supported a path to legalization and
quoted voices supporting rights for migrants. The arguments called for a fair path to legalization
for the undocumented immigrants specifically noting that the national economy will be hurt if
the immigration policies are not reformed. For example, an article in IA (Haniffa, 2015, October
30), specified the need to create a fair path to legal status for undocumented immigrants. The
article quoted Congressman Lieu, who specified the need for “comprehensive immigration
reform, which includes a pathway to legalization for more than 11 million undocumented immigrants” as the undocumented immigrants are the “engine who drives our nation forward” (Haniffa, 2015, October 30). The arguments in this article present undocumented immigrants as “engine” or the drives the nation’s economic progress. Such imagery was used to call for an immigration reform that would involve job creation and economic growth and create a pathway to legalize the undocumented immigrants who are essential for the U.S. economy. However, the call did not claim for a path to citizenship, instead, argued for a right to work and a path to be legalized. Another article represented voices of Asian Indian American doctors and lawyers who critique the shortcomings of the existing immigration policies while arguing for a need for sensible immigration reforms (Rajendran, 2015, September 25). However, similar to the previous example, such calls for reform only argue for a path to legalize undocumented immigrants, which would protect their right to work. Further, in their appeal the represented voices (community elites like doctors and lawyers) projected undocumented immigrants as vital for “economic growth” as they contribute “to the labor force,” thereby marking their acceptance as contingent on their contribution. The economic need arguments emphasized that undocumented immigrants were vital workforce. Implicit in such discursive strategy was a note of caution that without the undocumented immigrants, the American economy would suffer as lots of sectors will have a scarcity of labor and many jobs will be left undone. While journalists and individuals represented in the papers recognized the importance of undocumented immigrants and advocated for rights for immigrants, the rights were limited to those that primarily benefited U.S. economy. Further, as the economic contribution is considered as one of the vital resources of acceptance, the community members continue to present economic logics as they argue for immigrants’ rights.
The pro-reform arguments also applauded the president’s proposed executive DACA and DAPA immigration initiative. The arguments describe the initiative as “relief” (IP, 2015, January 2), that will provide “legal protection and work authorization” (Sohrabji, 2015, March 5), “make life easier and secure” (Pais & Jha, 2014, November 28). These descriptions of the proposed reform acknowledge that the proposal is a temporary fix to address the needs of those caught in the immigrant complication but nevertheless would give a chance to the workers who support the economy. For example, an article in India Abroad covering President Obama’s executive reform announcement calls the proposal a “relief” as it would “protect at least 5 million people from deportation.” It also specifies that the announcement “is of great interest not only to thousands of employers, but also to immigrant communities including the many undocumented Indian Americans” (Pais, 2014, November 28). The article marks the proposal as a positive step to help the undocumented immigrants but the description that it is of interest to “thousands of employers” presents how the initiative would be advantageous in economic terms. Another article in India Post emphasized that the proposal would help undocumented community members from coming out and becoming “fully contributing members of the society and economy” (IP, 2015, January 15). The news article in its appeal stressed how the reform would enable the undocumented immigrants to live (temporarily for 3 years) in the U.S. without a fear of deportation, simultaneously it also supported conditions of temporary employment that benefit the U.S. Another article also commended the proposed reform specifying it as an important step towards helping the undocumented immigrants. An article in IW explains that the reforms “will help bring out of the shadows millions of undocumented immigrants who contribute a tremendous amount to our society and economy every day. The executive order is an important and long-overdue first step towards normalizing these people” (Khatri, 2014, December 12).
The news excerpt justifies the proposed initiative as novel as it would provide undocumented immigrants a path to legal rights. However, the note that these immigrants “contribute a tremendous amount to our society and economy every day” utilizes the dominant logic of national belonging where acceptance is contingent on their unconditional economic contribution. Building on Hardt and Negri’s conception of the functioning of the contemporary empire, Ono (2012) notes that dominant notion of immigration is that it should be a system that efficiently controls the labor supply. The economic concern is a fundamental issue for any society, and by using such logic in their pro-immigration argument the ethnic news articles recontextualize dominant ideology in the ethnic media context to argue for immigration reform. Further, the repeated use of the phrase “our society” present an attempt by the newspapers to position themselves as close to the dominant society, where aligning with the dominant notion of acceptance the ethnic newspapers argue for the legalization of undocumented immigrants through economic terms.

Numbers were used in some arguments while justifying the need for immigration reform. The use of large numbers in arguments for undocumented immigrants had significant implications as they create an imagery of how the acceptance of a very large number of undocumented immigrants might actually benefit the economy, instead of negatively affecting it. As van Dijk (1988) noted numeric account increases perceptions of accuracy and therefore are vital tools for news representation. For example, an article published in IW contends, “Allowing five million people to get temporary legal protection and work authorization through DACA and DAPA could add $22.6 billion to the U.S. economy over five years... reduce the national deficit by $60 billion” (Sohrabji, 2015, March 5). The numeric account of how much the undocumented immigrants would “add” to the economy and “reduce” the deficit over a specific period (5 years)
increases the persuasiveness of the argument. This representation constructs such immigrants as desirable because of their economic value and thereby reiterating the dominant logic of acceptance. Another article specified that “advocates of the initiative [DACA and DAPA] have estimated that the plan would add more than $700 billion to the U.S. economy by the year 2024” (Sohrabji, 2015, June 2). The use of numbers to explain the economic growth makes the pro-reform argument stronger as it emphasizes how the acceptance of such immigrants would lead to the greatest economic advantage of the nation.

Additionally, the numeric representation varied widely in their apparent numeric exactness. For example, articles in India West quoted different numbers to specify the monetary contribution, such as two different numbers were quoted in the same article “five million people and flush more than $100 billion into the U.S. economy” and “add $22.6 billion to the U.S. economy over five years” (Sohrabji, 2015, March 5) or another article specified that the reform “would add more than $700 billion to the U.S. economy by the year 2024” (Sohrabji, 2015, June 2). However, these differences were never explained or corrected, which thereby confirms van Dijk’s perspective, which argues that numbers “do not primarily serve to provide exact specifications but merely function as rhetorical means to suggest factuality” (van Dijk, 1988, p. 182). Use of numbers in ethnic newspapers makes an argument more persuasive, and helps in explaining to the community members the importance of reforms for the undocumented immigrants. However, such strategy only sees economic value in immigrants and fails to discuss immigrants in terms of their human rights.

An important function of the ethnic press is to guard the interests of their ethnic community. The articles argued that the reforms for undocumented immigrants are necessary as they would provide them temporary legal authorization to stay and work. These findings support
the ethnic media perspective, which argues that ethnic newspapers often raise awareness about issues (immigrant rights, role of immigrants in the nation’s socio-economic system) not attended in mainstream media (Matsaganis et al., 2011). However, Ono and Sloop’s “logics of discourse” framework helped to identify the ambiguous nature of this discourse. The findings show that the arguments applied economic logic in their pro-reform calls. This discursive strategy demonstrates how ethnic discourses assuming a liberatory stance while arguing for reform for undocumented immigrants can also reconstruct hegemonic conditions of belonging. In ethnic newspapers, circulation of cultural meanings contributes to the social construction of knowledge. Therefore, the presence of contending logic does not offer an overall liberatory image, instead such perspective reifies the dominant description of immigrants who deserve reforms. However, it should be noted here that these arguments are presented in ethnic newspapers that mainly cater to the ethnic audience. As mentioned, terms of entry and acceptance for this immigrant group were through material terms, which positioned these relatively new groups of immigrants in a higher socio-economic position than other immigrants and minorities. Therefore, the discursive strategy applied by the newspapers show an implicit tension. On the one hand the repeated use of words like “our society” shows an attempt by the ethnic newspapers to present themselves as part of the larger U.S. society, thereby establishing an equivalence with the mainstream while they also claim the need to recognize the undocumented “others” however, through the dominant economic need logic. The next section details the arguments for the documented immigrants.

**Arguments for documented immigrants.** Pro-reform arguments also presented the need to support documented immigration and immigrants. According to United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS.gov, n.d.) Asian Indian documented workers predominantly
come in through employment-based visas, which are temporary in nature, and require them to leave after their visas expire. News articles presented arguments calling for reforms to retain the high-skilled workers who came in through employment-based visas. The newspapers also presented arguments commending the proposed H-4 Spousal work authorization initiative. These arguments labeled documented immigrants as “high-skilled” “best talent,” “talented workers” or highly qualified,” and claimed the need for a sensible reform to attract and keep the highly skilled and educated documented immigrants. Further, it should be noted here that the portrayal of documented immigrants varied widely from the portrayal of undocumented immigrants in material terms, where documented immigrants were primarily represented as “educated” and “highly skilled” members of the community. Additionally, documented immigrants were mainly presented as members of their own community or prospective immigrants from India. This largely differed from the representation of undocumented immigrants who were presented either as a homogenized entity or in some cases as migrants from South or Central America. Also, arguments for documented immigrants claimed for a path to citizenship for such migrants, unlike a need to “legalize” argument presented for the undocumented migrants. The next section will highlight the different pro-reform arguments for documented migrants.

News articles presented reform as necessary to retain the highly educated and skilled immigrants in hi-tech industries or in the STEM area, who are on employment visas or student visas. The arguments specifically stressed that reforms are necessary for the U.S. to become international economic giant and to sustain the international labor market competition. For example, a news article published in IA argues the need for “Bipartisan push for fairness for high-skilled immigrants” (Joseph, 2015, March 27) to retain the experienced high-skilled workers, warning that departure of these immigrants would negatively impact the U.S. economy.
The article used phrases such as “push for fairness,” “aggressively push to get this bill through,” or “removing per country limits for employment based green cards, American companies will be able to access the best talent” (Joseph, 2015, March 27) to explicitly highlight the need to recognize and accept skilled immigrants. However, simultaneous use of labels like “high-skilled” “best talent,” or highly qualified” implicitly point that their entry and acceptance is contingent on their contribution.

Some of the arguments supported a path to citizenship for documented immigrants and argued “path to citizenship” as a necessary clause of the immigration reforms. An article in IA specifies the need for a path to citizenship as otherwise the present immigration system is “creating an economically unhealthy reliance on temporary visas and costing the U.S. economy in the form of attrition of experienced highly skilled workers departing the U.S.” (Joseph, 2015, March 27). The argument for a path to citizenship highlights the negative economic effect of the current immigration policies, and by labeling the system as “economically unhealthy” the argument presents an economic need logic in the call for revised immigration laws. Further, the article specifies that the Bipartisan push for fairness for high-skilled immigrants would implement a system where “all equally qualified highly skilled workers, no matter their country of birth, will receive green cards in the order they apply and based solely on the skills they bring to America...” The argument presented in supports for reforms for high-skilled workers, articulated that “all equally qualified highly skilled workers” will get acceptance “based solely on the skills they bring to America.” Such perspective shows the ethnic newspaper’s acceptance of the dominant terms of belonging, where acceptance is contingent on their economic contribution. Likewise, news articles in other papers called for reform to support documented immigrants, specifying “many South Asian immigrants to the United States in both the
employment-based and family-based categories will continue to face lengthy delays (over a decade in some cases) in obtaining permanent residency. These lengthy delays are of serious humanitarian and economic concern to the United States” (IW, 2015, September 18). The news presents the shortcoming of the present immigration system, emphasizing how delays would affect the economy. Creating a path to citizenship for documented immigrants was presented as a crucial aspect of the immigration reform, where the newspapers particularly noted how losing such “high skilled” and “highly educated” immigrants would affect the U.S. economy. At the same time the image of highly skilled and educated to support claims for belonging shows the acceptance of the dominant notion of citizenship as requiring a contribution. Historically segments within the community have succeeded in establishing their positionality within the U.S. socio-economic frame through such sense of belonging. The articles’ reiteration of these terms of belonging show an attempt to gain similar socio-economic security for the recent pool of Asian Indian immigrants. Further, these arguments for acceptance differed from arguments on behalf of undocumented as these not only differentiated the immigrants such as “talented” in opposition to immigrants doing menial jobs, these also make distinction based on the immigrants’ material possession “poor” vs. “materially privileged immigrants” and also in terms of their claims of acceptance (path to citizenship vs. legalization).

The newspapers also commended the president’s proposed immigration initiative for the documented H-4 spouses. The arguments supported a pathway to citizenship specifically claiming that the spousal work authorization proposal as a necessary initiative to retain the highly educated skilled immigrants and their educated and skilled spouses. For example, an article in IB (2015, March 7) applauded the proposed initiative for H-4 spouses as it will make “life easier” for both the immigrants and “their employers.” Or as another article in IW
commended the proposed reform as it will “ease the economic burden to H-1B families” (Sohrabji, February 25, 2015). These arguments presented the reform as a tool that would grant the immigrants their rightful rights, however, the accompanying labels “talented workers” “highly educated” and “advanced degree holders” specify that the rights were limited to those that primarily benefited the U.S. economy. Further, the labels and the portrayal of such immigrants as economically contributing positions the immigrants as similar to the community members (immigrated in the 1960s), who entered U.S. through such terms of acceptance. Also, the arguments specifically distinguished the documented immigrants as Asian Indian, unlike the undocumented who were either represented as a homogeneous group or as immigrants from South or Central America. Such explicit reference to recent documented immigrants as “Asian Indian” or “South Asian” or “Indian” places them closer to the community members many of whom are American citizens of Asian Indian origin. Therefore, an economic appeal presents these new immigrants as deserving based on their contribution.

Additionally, the pro-reform appeal in the newspapers constructed the documented spouses and their H-1B visa holder husbands as a valuable labor force. An article in IW announcing the proposed reform to grant work authorization to dependent spouses repeatedly described how the American economy will benefit from the reform (Sohrabji, 2015, February 27). The journalist describes that the H-4 visa holders are mostly highly educated holding “advanced degrees, including Ph.D.s” and skilled individuals, therefore, their inclusion will be an addition to the national high-skilled labor force. The argument justifying the reform was implicitly specified that the talents and degrees of the documented spouses were granting them acceptance. Further, the article noted that an added advantage of the reform would be the retention of their highly skilled H-1B spouses (who make a significant contribution to U.S.
economy). Therefore, through such reform, the U.S. will not only be able to utilize these H-4 spouses’ (who are already legally present in the U.S.) talent and education but also not lose the skilled laborers (both H-1B visa holders and their H-4 visa holder spouses) in the highly competitive international labor market. Another news article presented how industries can gain from investing in immigrant labor, as these high-skilled and educated immigrants will be a “good stead in terms of competitiveness” (IA, 2014, January 10). The news represents these temporary visa holders and their spouses and their educated and skilled spouses as a valuable labor force in hi-tech industries. It specifically argues for the need for reform for documented immigrants, noting that the immigrants’ expertise will help maintain the competitiveness in the national and international market. Similar to past immigration reform in the U.S., these arguments predominantly called for reform to draw high-skilled immigrants who are needed to fill in the high-profile laborer shortage in the U.S. As the arguments portray the benefits of documented immigration reform, instead of emphasizing immigrants’ rights most of these arguments stressed the skills and education of the documented immigrants and how those would benefit the U.S. as the basis for their inclusion.

In the pro-reform arguments for documented immigrants, numbers were also used to construct an imagery of how immigration reforms to grant work permits to H4 visa holders and to create a path to citizenship for employment visa holders would add to the U.S. economy. Further, it should be noted here that numeric representation of the documented immigrant quoted same numbers across all newspapers, thereby maintaining uniformity in terms of numeric representation. These numbers are used as persuasive devices to show the presence of a large number of documented immigrants who are legally living in the U.S. however, the high-skills and education of such immigrants are wasted due to the existing immigration laws. For example,
a news in IP specifies, “individuals eligible to apply for employment authorization under this rule could be as high as 179,600 in the first year and 55,000 annually in subsequent years” (IP, 2015, February 25), another in IW notes “an estimated 180,000 people would be eligible in the first year, and 55,000 would be eligible in subsequent years” (IW, 2015, February 25), or as another in IB notes “the change could apply to 179,000 people in the next year, and 55,000 in subsequent years” (IB, 2015, March 7). These numbers are used to draw attention to the large number of immigrants who are already legally present in the U.S., but are unable to contribute to the economy because of the existing immigration laws. Also, it should be mentioned here as well that such imagery of highly qualified and skilled spouses to some extent matches the experience of the early immigrants who came to the U.S. in the 60s and 70s, where the spouses had a similar experience during the period of initial immigration (Saran, 1985). Additionally, such numeric representation also presents a positive image to the community readers, which shows that similar to their conditions these new immigrants are highly educated and skilled thereby should be accepted.

Additionally, the numeric representation of the dependent spouses were typically followed by description of how the inclusion of these immigrants in the labor pool of the country, would “raise the GDP by 0.5 percent after 10 years- that is equivalent to $100 billion in real GDP in 2024 in today’s dollars” (Haniffa, 2015, March 6), or “The influx of these workers in the U.S. labor force will grow the nation’s GDP by 0.5 percent over the next decade, adding $100 billion to the U.S. economy” (IW, 2015, February 25), or “contribution to the system totals more than $1 billion a year” (IB, 2015, February 7). The use of numbers in the statement is an example of the general trend in news reporting where journalists provide hard figures in their report to heighten objectivity. As such the use of number, “$100 billion,” “1
“billion” increases the authenticity of such claims. Further, for immigrants this numeric representation has a specific implication. The statement uses an absolute number “$100 billion” accompanied by a measure of increase over “10 years,” which stresses the facts and implies the continuing economic contribution of the immigrants over the years. Based on van Dijk’s (1988) conception, it can be argued that such representations have a larger impact, as in the present context it becomes more important as it carries the message of how documented Asian Indian immigrants continue to add to the country’s wealth. Further, such numbers were consistent across all the newspapers, thereby signifying the economic importance of supporting reforms for the documented immigrants. Also, it connects the readers, who have gone through similar experiences or are victims of the present system (as their wives cannot work because of existing laws) to the mentioned documented immigrants. Therefore, such numeric representation persuades the readers to come out and support these documented immigrants who are suffering economically, and emotionally due to the existing immigration laws.

The news articles presented the need for reform and path to citizenship for the documented immigrants. The arguments for reform represented the documented immigrants in terms of their economic value, positioning them within the capitalistic system. As capitalist logic establishes the value of commodities in markets, these immigrants are presented through their economic worth. However, at the same time call for their rights signify the need to recognize the contribution of the community members. Ethnic newspapers engage in the ideological construction of reality, and constructing documented immigrants using dominant capitalistic logic implies a strategic attempt to reaffirm the community's added economic contribution to the nation. Also, the calls specifically named documented immigrants as newly immigrated members of the society, or prospective immigrants from India, who are similar to the initial (post-1965)
migrants, in terms of their privileged socio-economic and education condition. However, except in some articles in India Abroad, undocumented immigrants were not mentioned as community members instead such immigrants were represented as a homogeneous entity and in a few case as migrants from South and Central America. Additionally, most of the newspaper articles (except a few in India Abroad) presented documented immigrants more prominently than undocumented immigrants, representing such immigrants as similar in terms of their class, education and material position. This discursive strategy represents the community’s attempts to promote the subjects who match the portrayal of Asian Indians as model minorities. The next section details on the voices they were represented in the pro-reform arguments in this discourse.

**Represented voices.** Arguments utilizing the economic discourse predominantly featured voices and perspectives of national or community elites such as the President, congressmen, House representatives, film-maker, immigration advocates, etc., who were either directly quoted or paraphrased. These voices used the economic argument to support a path to citizenship or legalization (in the case of undocumented migrants) for immigrants contributing to the U.S. economy.

Support for reform for undocumented migrants was presented using nationally recognized important voices. A few articles quoted or cited the president or other political leaders like local Congressman, or Senator (non-community members) to support the news articles’ argument for reform. Or in a few other articles, these voices were represented in the lead, and supporting arguments were presented by the newspaper that followed to emphasize the argument in the quotes. It should be mentioned here that in representation of national level news like court standing against the president’s executive reforms or appeal to the Congress for a
comprehensive reform, important voices like that of the President’s or other national level leaders were predominantly used, however, local level news like meetings, fundraiser voices of the local community leaders, political party supporters (community members) were given preference.

As noted the national level arguments for reforms were presented through elite voices, who either supported the need for reforms for immigrants or countered the negative mainstream rhetoric against immigration and immigrants. For example, an article on President Obama’s appeal to the Congress to pass immigration reform starts off paraphrasing the President’s appeal in the lead, where he specifies that the immigration reform “would improve the national economy” (IP, 2014, April 22). The article centers its pro-reform argument on the President’s call. The news article cites the president’s appeal in the lead and then followed with their arguments to support the president’s appeal to support immigration reforms. Such arguments reiterated the president’s urge for reforms, through phrases like “[reform] would improve the national economy and strengthen the security.” A few other articles as well cited or quoted the president to support their pro-reform arguments. Such as another article in India Post (2014, December 4) cited Obama to present how the president’s proposed executive reform would benefit the economy, or an article in India West (2015, February 24) cited the president to note how the proposed reform for H-4 spouses would benefit the reform. Or a few articles quoted or cited other national leaders, like Congressman, Senator, etc. These quotes or cites were predominantly used to argue for the immigrants right to work. However, repeated representation of immigrants as “educated,” “high-skilled,” laborers or “laborers doing jobs no one wants” undermines the human right aspect of the appeal. Instead, acceptance becomes contingent on the migrants’ contribution, whether in the form of their skills or education or their labor. As such the
use of mainstream elite voices to support a pro-reform appeal in ethnic newspapers shows the newspapers acceptance of the dominant terms of belonging, which offers acceptance only to those who economically contribute. It should be noted here that one of the prominent aspects of the post-1965 Asian Indian community was their acceptance of dominant terms of belonging. With the passage of time, even though the community has become more heterogeneous in terms of race, class base differences, some of the arguments in the newspapers showed continued acceptance of dominant terms of belonging.

Economic discourse also represented voices and opinions of community elites and immigration advocates, who argued about the need for reforms. These represented voices argued for reforms in general or for documented immigrants. Also, community elite voices and advocates were presented as more aware and concerned about immigration issues where they were represented as fellow immigrants through labels like “Asian India American” or South Asian American.” For example, a news article in IA quoted a community advocate Neha Gill (Director of an institute working towards gender equality), who specified, “most studies on the socioeconomic impact of immigration show that immigrants bring great benefit to the US economy by contributing to the labor force and the tax base, and sustaining small businesses” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015, September 25). The statement shows that the community advocate argues for reform for immigrants based on capitalistic logic. She specifies “contributing to the labor force and the tax base, and sustaining small businesses” as benefits of accepting immigrants. An account of their contribution further recasts the immigrants solely in economic terms, measuring their benefit to the state. Another article in IA, covering reactions to the H-4 spousal reform quotes a community immigration advocate Pratik Dakwala, co- founder and director of Immigrant Voice (a non- profit organization working for high- skilled documented immigrants),
who specifies that the reform “will allow skilled immigrant spouses to contribute the full measure of their talents to the US economy” (Joseph, 2015, March 6). The quote presents the reform as an initiative that grants immigrant spouses opportunity to utilize their skills fully, however, the description “skilled” and “contribute the full measure of their talents” presents the immigrants in material terms, whose talent will add to the U.S. economy. Immigration advocates play a vital role in the community by helping immigrants with their immigration related problems, and to fight for their immigrant rights. Therefore, representation of voices of these high-level community activists play a vital role in the shaping and constructing perspectives regarding immigration. It should be noted here that a couple of these represented advocates are specifically dedicated to fight for the rights of documented immigrants. These activists are represented in positive terms as members of the grassroots organization who are fighting for the legal, high-skilled immigrants living in the U.S. Further, these activists are portrayed as representing the interests of the Asian Indian skilled immigrants and their family members. However, though these activists were represented as working specifically for the community against mainstream exploitation, the repeated representation of the immigrants as “skilled,” and “educated” exemplifies the community’s preference towards supporting immigrants who would continue to carry on the community’s reputation as socio- economically contributing ideal immigrants.

Two articles published in India Abroad also called out for the need to support undocumented immigrants in economic terms. These two news articles presented voices of community advocates, such as civil rights activists, and members of immigrant advocacy groups, who portrayed undocumented immigrants as needing reform because of their “longtime contribution to the American economy and society at large” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015, September
25). Though these representations presented economic logics in their construction of immigrants as the economic backbone, support system, these represented voices appealed for granting the immigrants their basic human rights (right to work, right to live with dignity and respect). These arguments presented in ethnic newspaper reiterate the conditions through which the readers (Asian Indian Americans) claimed their belonging after their migration. Therefore, this can be argued to be an attempt of the newspapers to present an economic argument to the ethnic readers (many of whom after immigration claimed their own belonging through material terms), to mobilize them, so that they appeal for rights for deserving immigrants like them.

The analysis shows that the pro-reform arguments utilizing economic discourse predominantly presented elite voices, and as such these specific arguments lacked migrant voices. Ethnic media scholars have noted (Shi, 2009; Viswanath and Arora, 2003) that community elites might be the one who introduces and manage the majority and most important forms of community discourse, or have privileged access to the ethnic media, and may set or change the agenda of community discourse and knowledge construction. Therefore, the representation of these elite voices (who themselves claimed belonging through economic terms) promotes the uncritical perception that acceptance is earned through economic contribution. However, it fails to address the need for basic rights that would safeguard the immigrant’s social and economic security.

**Conclusion: Economic discourse.** The arguments contributing to the economic discourse show the need for reform for both documented and undocumented immigrants supporting a path to citizenship (documented migrants) and legal rights for undocumented migrants. However, the arguments predominantly constructed reforms as vital for economic purpose. It should be noted here that a key aspect of ethnic newspapers is to act as the advocate
for the immigrant rights. The arguments presented under this discourse presented the need to recognize immigrants’ rights, however, the ethnic news discourse repeatedly used the dominant ideology of capitalism in constructing the immigrant. Such representations help in shaping the community members’ perception of immigration reform and immigrants. This is because as educators’ ethnic newspapers teach the subtle rules about correct behavior and values of the new society. Findings show that in the arguments, immigrants are continuously represented in terms of their economic worth. Such calls are loaded with “logics of capital” (Ono & Sloop, 2002, p. 32) a predominant ideology that exists in a capitalistic society such as the United States. Therefore, by applying dominant logics of capitalism the ethnic newspapers urge community members (many of whom are U.S citizens or legal resident) to support deserving immigrants similar to them, who claimed their belonging through material terms.

Further, based on Ono and Sloop’s (1996) framework, ethnic media discourse cannot be assumed to be simply counter-hegemonic. The analysis shows that the Asian Indian ethnic media discourse works towards foregrounding the positive effects of immigration reforms rather than highlighting the conditional acceptance of the immigrants. Further, the news discourse argues for social progress of “all aspiring Americans” (IW, 2015, August 12), however, erases the consequences of such progress. Finally, though immigration reform is portrayed as beneficial to the overall welfare of the nation, the economic discourse did not consider the class-based distinction and oppression among different segments of immigrants. The next section details another dominant discourse, Humanistic discourse, that was prominent in the newspaper articles.

**Humanistic discourse**

The humanistic discourse consists of another significant set of arguments that appraises the immigration policies as vital for both the documented and undocumented immigrants.
Findings show that a substantial number of news articles (about 40 percent) presented a humanistic argument in their pro-reform call, thereby making it another prominent discourse that is used to construct the image of a deserving immigrant. These arguments show sympathy and concern for the immigrants, who are represented as helpless, powerless, desperate, and victims of circumstances.

In earlier works on media representation of immigrants and immigration, van Dijk (2000) identifies “humanitarian discourse” (p. 73) as one of the fundamental strategies in representing immigration issues. He notes that demonstration of such strategies includes exhibiting empathy for the plight of the immigrants, criticizing policies that violate the rights of the immigrants, appealing to moral responsibility, condemning human rights exploitation, and praising people who stand up for human rights. van Dijk (2000) notes such discourse normally “has recourse to forms of (real, and not apparent) empathy” (p. 85).

Other scholars have noted that humanitarian discourse initiates moral sensibility claiming action from the safe and secure distance, towards the suffering and endangered (Tester, 2010). Chouliaraki (2012) explains that humanitarian discourse represents humanitarian appeals, where human migrations are presented through the narrator’s own emotional account and as such articulate “something important about the ways in which we represent the world beyond ourselves as a cause for our action” (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 13). Further, she notes that mediated calls for humanitarianism, are articulated through different prevalent logics that urge audiences “to act on vulnerable others” (Chouliaraki, 2011, p. 364). It should be noted here that Chouliaraki’s (2010, 2011, 2012) theorization of humanitarian discourse explicates celebrity discourse centered on the representation of refugees. Further, it should be mentioned that the noted conception of humanitarian discourse was presented based on analysis of mainstream
media (Chouliaraki, 2010, 2011, 2012; van Dijk, 1988, 2000), which were specifically targeted towards the dominant members (predominantly white western audiences) of the society, where the dominant society is urged to act on the suffering of the ‘others.’

However, my analysis is notably different as it is centered on ethnic newspapers representation of immigration reforms and immigrants. Ethnic newspapers discourse is significantly different as they act as the advocate for the community and oversee the interests of the community members. My analysis focuses on how immigration reforms and immigrants are presented to their community members, who have been recognized as model minorities and enjoy a comparatively privileged socio-economic position in the U.S. in comparison to other minorities and immigrants. As I analyze the data covering the representation of two different immigration initiative; one targeted towards undocumented immigrants (DACA and DAPA initiative), and the other directed towards the dependent spouse of documented immigrants in the ethnic newspapers, I attempt to identify if the humanistic order of reality and representation hold true in ethnic newspapers. The following section details the different humanistic appeals that were published in the four ethnic newspapers. Based on the argument patterns this section if further divided into two sub-sections, Representation of undocumented immigrants and Representation of documented immigrants.

**Representation of undocumented immigrants.** Detailed investigation showed that among the four newspapers, *India Abroad* published a greater number of news articles covering undocumented immigrants. These articles personalized the plight of undocumented workers struggling with dangers of deportation, economic injustices, inequalities, and living with the constant fear of deportation. Through the use of highly emotional imagery the articles appeal to the ethnic newspaper readers to sympathize with migrants without basic human rights. Further,
the articles presented voices and stories of undocumented immigrants and their advocates showing them as deprived of basic human rights and inviting a sympathetic reaction from the community members. News published in the other three newspaper described the undocumented immigrants predominantly from the perspective of prominent members of the society, such as council members, immigration advocates, etc. Therefore, the following section is divided into two sub-section, Representation in India Abroad and Representation in other newspapers, which will detail the discursive strategies used in the news articles, specifically focusing on the logics used in these articles to represent the undocumented immigrants.

**Representation in India Abroad.** Scholars have noted that the “moral emphasis on pity” (Boltanski, 2000; Chouliaraki, 2010) has not only considerably mitigated suffering but has also introduced a dominant discourse of action, that depends on emotions about suffering. According to scholars, this has introduced an urgent concern to do something for the people who are suffering. Detailed investigation of the news articles from India Abroad shows the presence of humanistic discourse in their representation of immigration and immigrants. The articles presented narratives of fear, vulnerability, and future hope and aspiration. The articles also featured voices of undocumented migrants narrating their personal stories of struggles. However, rather than simply representing migrants as vulnerable thereby evoking pity, the articles call for a sympathetic reaction as they argued for recognition and rights. It should be mentioned here that sympathy is different from pity and empathy. As Fairbairn (2009) notes, it is an emotive response, which means “suffering with, feeling the same suffering” (p. 192). He further asserts that unlike empathy it is an immediate and uncontrolled reaction and it can “overwhelm us whenever we see someone in pain or distress, whether they are close or far away, whether they are related to us or not, whether they are of the same race as us or not, the same skin color or
not” (p. 192). A news article in *India Abroad* utilized a humanistic logic to urge the readers to support and sympathize undocumented migrants. In particular, the news articles presented voices arguing for family rights, arguments emphasizing the need to recognize the importance of family ties, described the undocumented immigrants’ future hopes and aspiration, narrated stories of the fears of the migrants to come out of the shadows, represented the vulnerability of the migrants because of their legal status and how they are cheated by different groups of people. This section details the different arguments presented in the newspaper.

The articles presented voices arguing for family rights and stories on pain of family separation, particularly emotional suffering of children, due to parents’ deportation. An article in *IA* titled “‘Before you go to bed, pray to God that we get a Green Card’” (Pais, 2014, November 28), represented personalized information about the undocumented immigrants struggle through stories of young migrants. Throughout the article different examples are presented narrating migrants’ personal struggles as undocumented individuals. The vulnerability of the undocumented immigrants is presented by providing individual references to their struggles. For example, an undocumented youth’s story presented in the news article describes,

“I grew up thinking I was American,” Gomes said. “I could not understand why parents told me every night, ‘Before you go to bed, pray to God that we get a Green Card.’”

While Gomes’s father was deported to Bangladesh, his mother, with the help of an attorney, was allowed to stay another year before she was also deported to India. She had to wear a tracking device around her ankle (Pais, 2014, November 28).

The personal narrative along with the journalistic account describes a migrant’s inability to comprehend his parents’ fear of deportation (as a child). In particular, the article uses migrant’s story that narrates “I grew up thinking I was American,” only to find the truth the hard way
through parents’ deportation, portrays a deficit of rights. The narrative representing accounts of both parents’ deportation shows the pain of family separation, and as such calls, the readers’ attention to the migrants lack of rights. Additionally, the description of the migrant’s mother wearing “a tracking device around her ankle” explicates the lack of dignity. Other news articles presented other unhappy stories of family separation or living with the constant fear of getting separated. Another article in India Abroad represented a quote from a migrant to make the subject directly speak to the audience. Such strategy was used to present the migrant’s direct voice to appeal to the readers (community members, who are typically U.S. citizens or permanent residents) to sympathize with migrants who are without basic human rights. The article represented the voice of high school senior whose parents have been deported. The article quoted the teenager who questioned, “Mr. President, how would you feel if you came home tonight and your daughters and your wife were not there? How would you feel if you could not be there to tuck your kids into bed at night?” (Pais & Jha, 2014, November 28). The migrant’s quote explicates the image of a regular family life, where the family members come back to their family after a day’s work and find happiness is small everyday things like being with the family, tucking “kids into bed at night.” The representation of everyday family ritual hereby creates a commonality among all human beings, a logic that transcends class, race, and socio-economic position. Further, such an appeal to the president shows how these migrants who should have equal opportunities in terms of the family are often deprived of family rights due to their migration status. Through of use of immigrant voices and journalistic narrative the articles presented stories of undocumented immigrants showing them as deprived of basic human rights and through such logic, the newspaper invited a sympathetic reaction from the readers.
A few articles also presented the need to recognize the importance of family ties, which were described as absent from the current immigration policies. The arguments presented the legalized immigrants’ (DACA recipient) anxiety of prospective family separation, parents' deportation, thereby representing the fallacies of the present immigration system. In an article in *India Abroad*, an existing DACA beneficiary specified that “The worst part is the youth members who applied for DACA earlier have been granted and are working legally. (But) (their undocumented) Parents who are working are not recognized by a broken system” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015, February 27). The article labels the present immigration system as “broken” and the narrative of not recognizing the undocumented parents of a legal DACA recipient highlight a deficit of citizenship rights and the social rootedness of the problem. The narrative shows that the DACA reforms legalize the recipient only. However, such legalization is not extended to the family members (parents) of such immigrant. Also, the phrase “parents who are working” explicates the fallacy of the system, which does not recognize the migrants who are contributing to the society in some way. Therefore, the account implies how the legalized DACA recipient continues to live under the threat of family members’ prospective deportation and the fear of family separation. This narrative as such presents how the existing immigration laws overlook family rights and thereby basic human rights. Other articles narrated stories describing the plight of family members like “[my parents] were underpaid for their long hours, couldn’t take breaks or sick days and routinely disrespected...” (Pais, 2014, November 28). The article represents the narrative of a person who is now an undocumented immigrant rights activist and who, “knows firsthand what it is to be an undocumented alien in America.” The account of immigrants, helplessly witnessing family members (parents) being “underpaid,” “disrespected,” positions the migrants closer to the Asian Indian American readers (newspaper’s target audience). This is
because such constructs are founded on the community’s dominant value like family relations, and respect. By presenting migrants as sharing same values the newspaper aspires to invoke sympathetic responses from the readers. Additionally, description such as “despite the fear that his wife and he [Raman Khanna] could be deported any time, he has been driving a cab and leading a meaningful life with his wife and two children” (Pais, 2014, November 28) construct an image of a family, to establish a connection between the migrant and the community members (Asian Indian Americans). The narrative of a family, a father/a husband working to provide a “meaningful” life to his family arouses a sense of commonness and suppresses the difference between ‘us’ (citizens) and ‘them’ (undocumented migrants). This imagery of the misery, exploitation, and description of the continuous fear regarding family members thereby applies a logic of commonness to invite sympathetic reaction from the readers for the undocumented immigrants who share similar family bonding.

A few news articles also presented a personalized description of the undocumented immigrants’ future hopes and aspiration. In their humanistic appeal, the articles humanized the people involved by describing who they are and what they do. For example, the article headlined, ‘Before you go to bed, pray to God that we get a Green Card’ explains,

“With help from family and friends, and the community at large he [Yves Gomes] has graduated from the University of Maryland with a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry “I am nervous about how my status will affect my chance of success,” he said, adding he doubted Obama’s executive order could help him... I always have to keep my options open because I don’t know what my future holds” (Pais, 2014, November, 28).

The article portrays in details the undocumented immigrant’s educational status, his anticipation regarding his future, and how the community supported his academic career. The description
humanizes the migrants, by presenting the undocumented immigrants as individuals who are involved in ordinary and familiar things. Such strategy helps to establish a commonality between the readers (Asian Indian Americans) and the undocumented immigrants, as it explicates the undocumented immigrants as individuals engaged in similar everyday activities. Also, such discursive strategy is intended to help the readers to relate (who had academic and future aspirations as well as young individuals) and sympathize with them. A few other articles also narrated similar stories. Another article in IA describes how,

_Bhupendra Ram, came to America when he was 2 years old... When in middle school in California he was required to take the PSAT, Ram learned he did not have Social Security number and could not register for the test. “The fear of people learning that I was undocumented haunted me throughout my adolescence, I was afraid of getting close to people for fear of what would happen once they learned I was undocumented”_ (Pais & Jha, 2014, November 28).

The account sketches an image of a young student going through school similar to other contemporary individuals. Unaware of his legal status he aspired to get educated, however when required to take his college preparedness test in middle school he first realized he was undocumented. The sketch of the young boy living in constant fear of being exposed further represents the suffering. This account like other examples involve foregrounding the plight of people, where undocumented immigrants are represented as participating in ordinary ordeals with normal actions, and the use of undocumented immigrant’s voice (personalization) humanizes the people. Further, the account of their schools, career etc. also makes them relatable to the readers. For example, the news reports another individual story, “when Singh began the college application process just like his classmates, he realized most applications, including
“scholarships, required a social security number” (Pais & Jha, 2014, November 28). This description constructs an image of a young, apprehensive, hopeful college applicant and phrase like “began the college application process just like his classmates” establishes a commonality with the readers (community members), many of whom are aware of such ordeal. Description of undocumented immigrants through their own narrative creates an imagery of immigrants who are helpless, powerless and desperate and victims of the system. As such these accounts are used to invite sympathetic reaction from the community members, who are citizens to stand by the undocumented immigrants who are deprived of basic human rights.

A few news reports also narrate stories explaining why undocumented community members are fearful of taking advantage of the previously available DACA benefits declared in 2012. These news articles also used the family trope to appeal for sympathy. For example, a news report in IA bemoans that “some fear in our community to apply for these programs” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015, February 27) as this might expose other undocumented family members who are similarly undocumented and have a higher threat of deportation. The article describes the fear of young undocumented migrants coming out of the shadows to claim for DACA initiatives. This is because the initiatives only cover migrants who came in as infant or child and not their undocumented parents. Therefore, out the fear of exposing their undocumented family members and the anxiety of separation from them often hold the migrants back from taking advantage of such initiative. In another article in India Abroad, a beneficiary of DACA is quoted specifying,

“Being undocumented was really tough not only on myself but my family. Both my parents had to work minimum wage jobs. There are times when my dad would literally be afraid to go to work because it was times when they would raid something in our
communities and he feared going to work he would get caught up in it...My mom was a domestic worker and she worked in very exploitive conditions and because we were undocumented, it really put her at risk” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015, February 27).

The quote describes undocumented parents working minimum wage jobs to support their families, however, the account that the father was afraid to go to work during raids, signifies that the employers being aware of the migrants’ status were exploiting them by giving them minimum wage. Further, the use of words to describe the mother’s “exploitive” and “at risk” work conditions create an image of misery. Such detailed description representing the plight of the undocumented immigrants explicate how these migrants are deprived of basic human rights. One of the prominent ideology among the Asian Indian community is a strong belief in family ties (Saran, 1985), therefore presenting the undocumented members fear regarding family positions them as similar to the other members of the community (Asian Indian Americans). This imagery thereby invites a sympathetic reaction from the readers for the undocumented immigrants who are victims of the existing immigration system.

News articles in IA also presented undocumented immigrants as vulnerable and suffering because of their undocumented situation. The news articles represent such stories by directly quoting or citing undocumented immigrant voices or by specifically identifying the exploited migrants through their names as they narrate their individual stories of living in the shadows, and presented an argument for their rights. For example, the news article headlined, “A path to emerge from the shadows” (Pais & Jha, 2014, November 28) narrates stories of the vulnerability of the undocumented immigrants, “We get robbed and beaten up all the time,” said an Indian owner of a small convenience shop in Jersey City. “We are afraid to complain to the police because many of us have no papers” (Pais & Jha, 2014, November 28). The narrative expicates
the vulnerability of the immigrants, who on the one hand cannot often are victims of crimes while at the same time they also cannot seek legal help for fear of getting exposed. Such narratives describe how the undocumented immigrants are victimized because of their status. Similarly, articles published a few months after the initial DACA & DAPA proposal, such as the article titled "Lives, future at stake underline need for immigration reform," (Haniffa & Jha, 2015 February 27) also largely exemplifies the vulnerability of the undocumented immigrants by using their voices to narrate their unhappy stories. Such as the article individually named a few of the undocumented immigrants “Rishi Singh,” “Pratishtha Khanna,” and “Syeda Asma Aktar” who narrated their own stories of struggle. These stories presented the daily struggles of the undocumented immigrants, who live with the constant fear of being deported, as they try to go through school, get jobs, and simultaneously get cheated by many muggers and robbers as they “know many of us are undocumented and are afraid to go to the police with complaints” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015 February 25). The news articles emotional account of the undocumented immigrants invokes sympathy. Other stories report prejudice and violence against the undocumented immigrants. An article in IA reported that undocumented immigrants often hear comments like, “Back to India, you Bangladeshi refugee” (Pais, 2014, November 28), or are beaten by local teenagers (Pais & Jha, 2014, November 28), as they try to make a living as taxi driver, restaurant dishwasher or distribute promotional materials at subways and busy junctions. The immigrants are portrayed as striving to make a living and to sustain themselves financially, and the description of them getting “robbed” and “beaten” presents the vulnerability of such immigrants. The narrative of their helplessness also explains that they cannot complain to police because of their legal status, further, emphasizes their vulnerability. Additionally, such violence was represented as carried on
by outsiders (non-Asian Indians), noting that they were predominantly individuals or groups from the mainstream society. However, there was no specific reference to the race or ethnicity of these individuals or groups. These narratives therefore, provide a more uncomfortable representation of the migrants, as they are implied as people sharing the same background (immigrants from India), facing discrimination (as Asian Indian), however, at the same time these migrants are represented as individuals belonging to the lower segments which widely differ from the positionality enjoyed by the Asian Indian mainstream society. As such these narratives do not evoke pity or irony, neither do they invoke empathy (by vicariously inhabiting the ‘others’ world) instead they are used to invoke sympathy (an uncontrolled emotional response) from the Asian Indian Americans, so that they would urge the Congress to “address the needs of those caught in the immigration tangle” (Pais, 2014, November 28).

A few of the articles specified that undocumented immigrants were being cheated by a myriad of people ranging from travel agents, middlemen, and touts who promise to provide government approved documents (Guha Mozumder, 2014, December 12; Jha, 2015, November 20). This discursive presentation of undocumented immigrants as vulnerable are used to initiate sympathy for the suffering people, thereby invoking an urge to help the sufferer. Through an increased use of emotional personal narratives, these news articles appeal to empathize with the migrants and immigration reforms are cited as a remedy to help the vulnerable migrants. In these articles also, the individuals cheating the undocumented immigrants were positioned as outsiders (not members of the Asian Indian community). The articles explicitly urged undocumented people to seek help from “officials at the Indian embassy or consulates to understand what they are supposed to do” (Jha, 2015, November 20) instead of getting help from people “masquerading as immigration attorneys or consultants” (Guha Mozumder, 2014, December
Such strategy shows the need to protect the undocumented others (who are part of the larger Asian Indian community) from being cheated by outsiders.

These above-mentioned articles published in IA presented a progressive discourse in their representation of undocumented immigrants. First of all, undocumented immigrants’ narrative is presented through their own voice. This means that the immigrants are imagined as an individual with her/his own humanity, or specifically the undocumented immigrants are portrayed as an agent who is provided his/her right to have a voice. Further, the portrayal of undocumented immigrants in these news articles presented a compassionate position instead of a pitiful account and the humanistic argument presented sympathy as a crucial resource to engage with the undocumented others.

The ethnic newspaper, IA, serves the Asian Indian community (in and around New York) (IA, n.d.), which has one of the oldest Asian Indian American settlements (Das Gupta, 2006; Saran, 1985). A recent report published by Pew Research Center (Passel & Cohn, 2014, November 18), shows that Asian Indians are the largest group of undocumented Asian immigrants, comprising of around 450,000 or 4 percent of the total number of undocumented population in the United States. Further, the report shows that New York has the maximum number of undocumented Asian Indian immigrants. The news articles presented stories of undocumented immigrants, portraying them as deprived of basic human rights thereby inviting an empathetic reaction from the readers. These descriptions presented a perspective of undocumented migration as exploited and lacking rights an argument that is often sidelined or silenced in national debates (Amaya, 2013). However, through immigrants’ stories of family separation, exploitation, fear, ethnic newspaper, India Abroad, presented human vulnerability as a question of injustice and portrayed immigration reform as the remedy. The findings, therefore,
suggest an attempt to initiate an uncontrolled and immediate response from the readers that would mobilize the community members, who are not only powerful local elites but have prominence at the national level as well to counter negative perspectives of undocumented immigrants and to argue for the migrants’ basic human rights.

**Representation in other newspapers.** Other newspapers, *India West, India Post* and *India Bulletin*, also constructed humanistic discourse, however instead of presenting undocumented immigrants’ personal stories, prominent voices were used to summon the readers (community members) to act on human suffering. The articles presented elite voices from the community narrating the suffering of the undocumented immigrants and as such arguing for their rights. The newspapers also presented voices and perspectives of prominent individuals from outside of the Asian Indian community who show sympathy for the undocumented migrants and present the need to support them.

News articles representing the community members’ voices or perspective predominantly specified the pain and anxiety of the undocumented migrants. For example, a news in *IP* quoted advocacy organization leader protesting against the lawsuit countering the DACA & DAPA initiative. Manju Kulkarni, Executive Director of the South Asian Network, said, “*Individuals who may be deported are understandably anxious and nervous. They cannot go on with their lives. Potential DACA/DAPA applicants would be deterred from filing, fearing that – should the courts permanently reverse Obama’s orders – they have now provided information that makes them more vulnerable to deportation*” (*IP*, 2015, January 7). The argument articulates a need to recognize that undocumented immigrants deserve basic human rights. The representation of the immigrants as “*anxious and nervous,*” “*who cannot go on with their lives,*” and “*more vulnerable,*” further adds to the call to grant them the right to belong to territorially bounded geo-
political area, and the right to articulate claims to belonging. Another article in *India West* notes that the undocumented children who have grown up as Americans and did not know any other place as home, however as they lack proper paperwork “are forced to live in the shadows of society--- as second-class human beings with limits on where they can work and study and what they can do” (Wadhwa, 2015, February 25). The journalist describes the immigrants as vulnerable and with limited accessibility to rights and resources.” The label “second-class human beings,” calls attention to their lack of rights, which they should possess as human beings. Other news articles published in *India Post* also argued for a need to support a deferred action for children who come to the U.S. illegally in order to flee gang persecution (IP, 2014, December 9; IP, 2015, January 15). Like the article in *India West*, this articles also specified a need to identify with the vulnerable “others,” and help fight for their rights. As such all these articles used highly emotional narrative, to initiate calls to the greater community to engage in claims for reform for the migrants.

The newspapers also published articles that presented prominent non-community elites critiquing the court stay order initiated by Texas and a few other states, against the President’s DACA and DAPA initiative. Such articles mainly covered protests initiated by powerful elites like House Representative, lawmakers, immigration organizations or immigration advocates. For example, an article titled “Disappointment Over Court Injunction on Undocumented” published in *IW*, gives an account of the protest from different quarters. The article describes how lawmakers, immigration organizations activists are protesting against the court ruling over the two proposed initiatives (DACA & DAPA) that would allow “an estimated four million undocumented people to remain in the country without fear of deportation” (Sohrabji, 2015, February 24). The news presents objection by State Attorney General, Congressman,
immigration rights organizations who “pledged to move forward to advance the rights of the nation’s 11 million undocumented people.” The represented voices and perspectives emphasized the necessity of reforms for the undocumented immigrants. For example, House Rep. Mike Honda is quoted, who specifies, “I strongly disagree with the ruling by a Texas judge that will temporarily delay the implementation of President Obama’s executive action on immigration...the president was well within the Constitutional rights of his office when he took his executive action on immigration. Millions of undocumented Americans are waiting for sensible, comprehensive immigration reform that will bring them out of the shadows” (Sohrabji, 2015, February 25). The phrase “I strongly disagree” with the anti-reform court ruling constructs an image of an advocate fighting for the rights of undocumented immigrants. Additionally, the description that the president is constitutionally correct in proposing reform for the vulnerable undocumented immigrants further emphasizes the Congressman’s claims to stand for the undocumented immigrants. As such the use of phrases to represent undocumented immigrants as vulnerable, “who constantly live in fear because of their immigration status,” or “lives in shadows and lacks opportunity for a better life” applies the logic of “common humanity” as the moral justification to act upon the people who are suffering, thereby urging the readers to come forward and support reforms that would benefit the undocumented others. It should be noted here that Mike Honda is an elected U.S representative from California, therefore, such appeal in the newspaper not only shows an attempt to speak to the Asian Indian Americans (newspaper’s readers) but implies the political importance of the community as voters. Further, the representation of his voice in the ethnic newspaper shows his support for the undocumented Asian Indian immigrants (though he does not explicitly name the community),
thereby emphasizing that the representative will support the underprivileged members of the community as well, as he recognizes the importance of the community.

In the paragraphs that followed the news article continued to use Rep. Honda’s and other immigration advocates’ voice in its appeal to the entire community to protest against the court standing. The article further quotes Honda, who specifies that “This temporary setback will not stop us from getting families ready for DACA and DAPA. We must continue the work of educating families and individuals in our communities, and make sure those who are eligible will apply immediately when the time comes” (Sohrabji, 2015, February 25). Through the use of words such as “we,” “families and individuals,” the councilman presents a commonality with the community members and the disadvantaged groups, emphasizing his support for the community (both it's privileged and the underprivileged members). Other articles also used important voices to describe the grievance against the court order. Mini Timmaraju, Executive Director of National Council of Asian Pacific Americans stated, “It is understandably a very confusing time for immigrants who are our most vulnerable…It is absolutely a deterrent to potential DACA and DAPA applicants. The state attorney generals behind the lawsuit wanted to deter people from applying” (IW, 2015, February 25). Like Rep. Honda’s, this statement also functions by representing immigrants as vulnerable. Through the use of the phrase such as “our most vulnerable” the representation appeals to the readers for reflection, emotion and to act to provide justice to the “undocumented other.” Finding shows the presence of a progressive discourse, protesting against anti-undocumented immigration, calling for sympathetic recognition of the migrants and urging for human rights for the migrants. This is evident in the overall discursive strategy of the news articles, where the journalists conducted the interviews, selected the quotes to present in the news imply the presence of a progressive strategy, which sympathizes with the
undocumented immigrants and appeals to provide the immigrants basic rights. However, the presence of appeals for undocumented immigration was lesser in number in these newspapers compared to news published in *India Abroad*. Also, based on the distinction between empathy and sympathy it can be argued that arguments presented in the other newspapers explicate a continuous movement between sympathy and empathy. As it pushes the community readers to understand the plight of the migrants it presents a sympathetic appeal, however, at the same time it attempts to construct an imaginative world “to understand, to experience, and to feel things as another human person might feel them” (Fairbarin, 2009, p. 192), instead of presenting such migrants as similar to the readers and thereby imagine what their own experiences, perception and feeling would be if they were in similar situation.

It should be mentioned that India West and India Post are both published from areas that have a large population of documented immigrants, thereby the discursive strategy of representation reemphasizes the notion that the local economic, social, political, and geographical structures of the community shape what and how news are covered. Additionally, the absence of humanistic arguments in *India Bulletin* (published from Chicago area which has a significant population of undocumented immigrants) explicates the ethnic media strategy of undermining and underreporting any derogatory information about their ethnic community, in order to maintain the positive image of the ethnic community.

**Representation of documented immigrants**

The humanistic argument was also presented in calls for reform for the documented migrants, specifically to call attention to the rights of spouses of high-skilled immigrants, who did not have work authorization in the U.S. News articles present emotional narratives by describing documented immigrants’ spouses as lacking economic rights. They also present
stories of these documented spouses’ financial and mental trauma and thereby present them as victims of the present immigration system.

A few news articles show support for the president’s proposed reform and call for a need to implement such reforms. These arguments predominantly present stories of the legal migrants financial and mental sufferings who are victims of the present immigration system, which does not allow them to work in the U.S., to argue for the reform. For example, news headlines such as “Slaves no more” (Haniffa, 2015, March 6), describe how the reform would grant dependent spouses freedom from misery and suffering. Historically in the U.S. the word “slave” has a negative connotation. Therefore, by explicitly associating the situation of dependent spouses to slavery, the headline invokes sympathy as it describes liberty from their miserable situation.

Other headlines were more direct in their calls for reform for the H-4 spouses, such as, “Spouses of H-1B visa holders look forward to getting jobs” (IW, 2015, February 12), “Options for H-4 Spouses, whether eligible or not for EAD” (IB, 2015, March 7), and “Spouse of H-1B visa holders to get work permits in U.S.” (IP, 2015 February 25). These articles, specifically in India Bulletin and India West used personal narratives of H-4 spouses describing their lives in the U.S., such as an article in IW narrates,

“Shalini Sharma loves spending time at home with her two young sons, but she really misses her work. “I am an architect,” said Sharma, who arrived in the U.S. almost six years ago..."I was a professional architect in India, and I was an interior designer. I had my own practice.” Sharma isn’t your typical stay-at-home mom who traded career for kids. She’s in the United States on what’s called an H-4 visa, a visa granted to dependents of H-1B high-skilled work visa holders, more than two-thirds of whom are men. These dependent spouses, many of them from South Asia, aren’t authorized to work
in the U.S. But in many cases, they are as well-educated and skilled as their partners. Sharma is one of an estimated 100,000 spouses of high-skilled work visa holders who could soon be allowed to work as part of President Obama’s new immigration plan.” (IW, 2015, February 12).

The discursive strategy of storytelling typically used to write feature stories, used in the news article creates an imagery of an ideal family. Such description constructs the immigrants as someone similar to the readers (community members). The journalist helps the readers to identify with the character by describing her as a mother, who is probably capable of perfectly balancing both work and family. The phrase “isn’t your typical stay-at-home mom who traded career for kids” not only calls for sympathy for the sacrificing immigrant but also marks her as a victim of the U.S. immigration system. Such description positions these immigrants as sharing the same experience as the readers (Asian Indian Americans), who probably went through similar dilemma during their initial days after their migration. Further, the account of her education, skills, and her job profile presents her as an ideal immigrant who would be a valuable addition to the U.S. labor force if granted permission to work. Also, the explanation of her inability to work in the U.S. shows how following the implemented legal rules set for dependent spouses, she is sacrificing her education, and skills. Such narrative calls for a need to support and help such immigrants, who go through similar experiences like the readers (community members) in their recently immigrated land. In another report published in IB personalized story was used to emphasize the need for the long-awaited immigration initiative. It narrates the story of Swapnil Gupta a software engineer, who described the new regulation as a “great relief,” specifying that the proposed immigration changes were blessings as “I miss my job, I miss my financial independence…I am looking forward to getting back to what I love doing” (IB, 2015,
March 7). Such narrative shows how the new regulation would be a reward to the legal immigrants (dependent spouses) who have sacrificed their “job,” “financial independence,” and get the opportunity to do follow their passion.

The humanistic argument was also used to represent immigrants who come to the U.S. on employment visas like H1 and L1 highlighting the claims for rights for such immigrants. A report on the continuing battle between technology advocacy groups and Indian technology companies quoted advocacy group Chairman who specified, “These big corporates hire people on H1 or L1 because when immigrants come in to the US they have less rights. They are forced to stay in the company and cannot change their job. They do not have leverage in negotiating salary and will not have access to their own immigration work or papers... which is why employers want to hire people on H1 even though we have unemployment rate of 6.5 percent” (Jha, 2014, August 1). The article specifies how immigrants who come in employment visas are vulnerable because of their immigration status. The journalist describes that as the laws bind the immigrants to a specific employer, it renders the migrants powerless. In such circumstances, the immigrants are often exploited by the employers, who pay them less while making them work for longer hours. As this immigrants’ immigration status in the U.S. is contingent on the employers, they become more vulnerable. The representation of immigrants as lacking basic human rights, thereby calls reform that would change the existing inhumane immigration policies.

While news articles used documented immigrants’ personal voices, in their argument the stories were primarily centered on how granting work authorization to high-skilled workers’ spouses would unburden them financially. Unlike the appeals for undocumented immigrants these articles presented a sympathetic account of documented immigrants, across all four
newspapers, presenting then as suffering because of the present immigration laws. The lack of working rights of dependent spouses was represented as a problem affecting the women and the documented immigrants’ family. Therefore, the articles portrayed the immigration reform as a remedy, noting that such a humane action would provide the documented immigrant families economic stability and better quality of life. Further, it should be noted, these humanistic appeals (presented prominently across all four newspaper) introduced judgment and sympathy as crucial resources for the readers’ engagement with the documented immigrants, who similar to the community members (who went through similar experiences after immigration) are subjects going through the process of adjustment in their newly immigrated land.

The representation of immigrants (documented and undocumented) in the four newspaper exhibited a noticeable pattern. Humanistic coverage was evident in all four newspaper. However, humanistic strategies such as personal stories were specifically used in *India Abroad* in their pro-reform appeal for undocumented immigrants. Though other newspapers also utilized humanistic argument in their appeal for reform, such assertion was particularly foregrounded through elite advocacy, and personal narratives were used only in description of documented immigrants. It should be noted that the newspaper *India Abroad* is centered in the New York area, which has the highest number of recorded undocumented immigrants (Census, 2010). Further, prominent immigration advocacy groups also have their headquarters in that area, who use humanistic argument to claim for rights for these immigrants. The other newspapers *India West* and *India Post* are published from the Bay area and Atlanta area respectively, which has a greater number of documented immigrants (Census, 2010). *India Bulletin* is published from the Chicago area. However, though the area has the second highest population of undocumented immigrants in the U.S., there was very less coverage of such immigrants in the newspaper. Instead, they used
humanistic narratives to appeal for and to represent documented migration. It should be noted that presence of such strategies in the newspapers (specifically India West, India Post and India Bulletin) show precisely the dynamic nature of immigration discourse, where a few articles or arguments implies the presence of a progressive discourse countering the dominant logics, and a few others though on the surface appears to counter dominant perception, they utilize dominant logics of immigrant acceptance or immigration.

The economic discourse and the humanistic discourse were the two main dominant discourses that were prominent in the new articles. However, analysis shows the existence of another discourse, Model minority discourse, which though not as prominent as the other two, was present in the newspapers as they argued for reforms. The next section details on the arguments and logics present in that discourse.

**Model minority discourse**

The final discourse that constituted the deserving immigrant imagery presents the notion of the model minority with respect to the Asian Indian immigrant community. This ideology asserts that certain minorities are successful because of their hard work, self-reliance, and cultural authenticity. Findings show that a few of the news articles (10 percent) applied or countered this ideology, where they negotiated the myth in different ways as they represented their community members and other immigrants and minorities as deserving immigrants.

An important function of ethnic newspapers is to establish their community’s position by describing their relation (equivalence or difference) with others communities. Scholars have noted that such ties are important to the economic and social establishment and to reiterate the socio-economic positionality of the community (Shah & Thornton, 2004; Shi 2009). Immigrants who arrived after 1965 presented themselves as a monolithic group defined by a common
culture, identity, and political objectives. These immigrants were labeled as model minorities, i.e., as successful due to their cultural values and their willingness to work hard in direct contrast to unsuccessful immigrants who were either excluded or rebuked as a failure. However, the continued immigration from India and different parts of the world has led to the demographic and class diversification among immigrant communities. This demographic and class diversification has resulted in the emergence of separate, often contradictory needs and interests among immigrants. As scholars noted certain groups within the Asian Indian immigrant community continued to present themselves as a problem-free monolithic group maintaining the social order of both their adopted and home country (or the model minorities), while others constructed alternate representations to intervene in social hierarchies and opposed race, class and gender-based discrimination (Das Gupta, 2006). Given the presence of contending ideologies within the community, this section will detail the logic applied by the ethnic newspapers as they constructed their community members and as they describe other minorities and immigrants, specifically seeking out if contending ideologies are applied. Further, this will also highlight the position of the discourse specifically focusing if the discourse is more resistant than complicit or if it is more complicit than resistant to dominant ideas and dominant logics.

The demographic and class diversity within the Asian Indian immigrant community has led to the initiation of different, and often conflicting dynamics. The analysis shows that in about ten percent of the articles, the myth of model minority continues to affect the construction of their own group and other immigrant and minority groups in relation to the reforms. A few of the news articles published in India Bulletin and India Post rarely presented or constructed any commonalities with other immigrants or minorities as they constructed a pro-reform argument. However, articles published in India Aboard and Indian West portrayed an inclusive imagery of
immigrants, which included other minorities like the Latino and other immigrants like East Asian immigrants, while arguing for a need to implement sensible immigration reforms for all immigrants. The following sub-sections will detail how the ethnic newspapers constructed their own community and other immigrant communities in their pro-reform arguments.

**Representation of immigrants in India Bulletin & India Post.** A few news articles separated out Asian Indian immigrants in their claims to comprehensive reform, while completely erasing any other immigrant groups. In the case of both documented or undocumented immigration these articles centered their stories only on their community members. The news articles specifically named their community members, “Asian Indians,” “South Asians,” or “Indian Americans” as they explained the proposed immigration initiative. The explicit use of such labels implies the reworking of cultural preservation, and as Rudrappa (2004) contends to reaffirm the community members’ belonging to the U.S. national culture as citizens. At the same time, the absence of explicit reference to other non-Asian Indian immigrant groups in these articles and the repeated naming of their community members imply an attempt to erase other immigrants whose success stories differ. Further, such noted absence in these few articles can also be argued as the group’s implicit tendency to present themselves as distinct from other immigrant groups.

The news articles in *India Bulletin* presented the details of the proposed immigration initiatives and advised how the community members should prepare in order to take advantage of the reforms once they are implemented. For example, a story published in *IB* titled “Politics in the U.S. and the foreign national” (IB, 2015, November, 14) remarked about the future of immigration reform and how that would affect the Asian Indian community in terms of their rights and claims to belonging. Non-Asian Indian immigration and immigrants who are the
focus of the mainstream immigration debate were not mentioned. Other articles in *India Bulletin*, such as coverage of President Obama’s DACA & DAPA proposed initiative (IB, 2014, December 13) or H-4 visa holder’s work authorization announcement (IB, 2015, March 7), represented how the proposed initiative would be advantageous to their own community members, specifically noting how the immigrants should prepare themselves for the change. In their representation of their community, these articles presented dominant logics of solidarity, cohesion, and self-reliance, which reinstated the belief that the model immigrants depend on themselves and on each other for their advancement. For example, the article on DACA and DAPA initiative is headline “*President Obama’s executive action plan: What it is and what you can do now*” (IB, 2014, December 13). The headline uses the pronoun “you” to directly speak to the community members, such usage implies the recognition of certain segments of the community whose narrative do not match the immigrant success stories. However, the article specifies that “*potential applicants should seek help from a qualified immigration practitioner who can help them identify whether they qualify for the benefits and assist them in preparing the necessary documentation.*” The article advises the “*potential applicants*” (undocumented migrants) to take help “*from a qualified immigration practitioner.*” However, though not explicit such advice accompanied by the use of “you” construct an image of community members helping each other. As scholars have noted (Das Gupta, 2006; Rudrappa, 2004) Asian Indian mainstream promotes such imagery representing themselves as self-reliant instead of representing themselves as depended on state assistance. As such this strategy implies an attempt to uphold values appreciated and acceptable by the dominant society, in their model minority conception.
Additionally, it should be mentioned here that the 32 articles published in *India Bulletin* specifically presented reforms and its apparent impact by explicitly targeting Asian Indian community and did not present how the reforms would affect the other immigrant groups. Instead, the articles demonstrated characteristics typical of ethnic media where they act as a bridge between their ethnic community and the mainstream by reporting on issues and problems that are of importance to their immigrant communities (Matsaganis et al., 2011; Viswanath & Arora, 2000). Also, it can be argued that the apparent “*erasure*” of other immigrant groups implicitly presents their deliberate attempt to distance themselves from other immigrants, as such association was perceived to negatively affect the model minority image, promoted by the post-1965 immigrants. Additionally, though the newspaper did not present reforms as advantageous to both documented and undocumented members, the articles acknowledge the presence of diversified population within the community. This is because instead of presenting the community as a homogenized whole, 3 articles out of 32 presented arguments for only undocumented immigrants, 11 presented the need for reforms for both and the rest supported only reforms for the documented immigrants.

News articles published in *IP* also favored their community members in their pro-reform arguments. Only one article in *India Post* presented a few other immigrant groups and noted a need for the Asian Indian community to unite with the others. In the other articles presenting pro-reform calls a few of the news articles argued the need for a general comprehensive immigration reform to help the members of the community, others specifically represented how the proposed DACA/DAPA and H-4 spousal immigration initiatives would benefit both the documented as well as the undocumented community members. The different logics applied by the articles in *IP* is presented below.
In the pro-reform news articles in *India Post* along with model minority discourse, the other two prominent discourse (economic and humanistic) was also apparent as they presented the arguments. These articles show how the different discourses interacted with each other as the newspaper represented the image of a deserving immigrant. For example, an article about President Obama’s November 2014 immigration initiative (Mehta, 2014, December 4) explains that the proposed reform would help the documented community members as it would allow “long-standing visa petitions to remain valid” even if the “[beneficiaries] seek to change jobs or employers.” The description that the initiative would allow the employment visa holders’ “visa petition to remain valid” in spite of “change jobs or employers,” presents an imagery of hope to exploited migrants, whose documented status in the U.S. is contingent on their employers. Such description implies the presence of the humanistic discourse as it makes the immigration problem relatable to the newspaper’s audience who either have gone through similar exploitation or are currently victims. Therefore, the readers can sympathize and support such migrants.

Further, the article specifies that the reform would make optional training program (OPT) eligible to more degree programs, specifically providing opportunities to the “community’s” STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) students and graduates. The news article presented the need to support documented immigrants who are highly-educated and skilled, where education and high skills were presented as qualities that would aid acceptance, thereby applying the dominant logic of acceptance, and also hint the underlying works of the economic discourse where immigrants are presented in economic terms. Additionally, the description “community’s students and graduates” reiterates the community image of highly educated and specialized, an image valued by the dominant society and thereby promoted by the Asian Indians. The analysis of the news article shows how different discourse was at play, where
immigrants are presented as exploited, thereby calling for a sympathetic reaction, presented as deserving due to their prospective economic worth (highly-educated and skilled), and at the same time representation as highly-educated and skilled feeds the privileged materialistic image of the community. Other arguments called for immigration reforms that would increase the scope of prospective documented migration. These arguments specify the need for reform to “substantially increase the number of H1-B visas to allow US employers to get access to the talent they need” (IP, 2015, April 14). The argument presents immigrants in economic terms as it describes how reform would “allow US employers to get access to the talent they need.” At the same time, the article presents the dominating narrative that circulates within the Asian Indian immigrant communities, which presents immigrants as highly educated and skilled thereby constructing immigrants only in terms of their materialistic value. It should be noted here as the newspaper constructed their arguments the economic discourse and the model minority discourse constantly interacted with each other as it presented the image of the deserving immigrant.

Other news articles also showed the prominence of the model minority and economic discourse as they presented the need for a reform that would change the current immigration laws and expedite the citizenship process for skilled immigrants. For example, an article reporting a community meeting with Councilmember Ash Kalra, quoted him saying, “We Indian Americans are ourselves going through transitional evolution in this country. We are all doing a lot of good as entrepreneurs, high-tech geeks, doctors, lawyers, imposing our good will upon this fantastic country” (IP, 2015, March 30). The article portrays Ash Kalra as the example of an immigrant success story and highlights stories of achievements of other Asian Indians in the U.S. Through such stories the article argues the necessity of passing an immigration reform that would support skilled immigration. However, the presence of phrases in the quote, such as
“imposing our good will” and “entrepreneurs, high-tech geeks, doctors, lawyers” explicates the community’s success stories and their determination to succeed. Further, the phrase “transitional evolution in this country” highlights the upward mobility of the group. These phrases emphasize the image of this immigrant group as a model minority. Additionally, the article uses material terms like their job profile, “entrepreneurs, high-tech geeks, doctors, lawyers,” or emerging senator, political office holder (governor, state senator, city councilman, etc.) to portray Asian Indian success. The article also asserts that both the members of the Asian Indian community and the U.S. are gaining from each other. For example, it specifies that the immigrant success stories “will help construct roadmaps for our community to empower ourselves, to represent our local communities as leaders, and make this glorious country of America a better place.” The article explicitly refers to the success stories as “roadmaps” to “empower” future generations and at the same time implies how these successful Asian Indians “make this glorious country of America a better place.” The different logics presented should be noted here, where success is measured in terms of positions attained in the national material structures such as “got into the school board, or planning commission,” at the same time the community members are also presented are vital as they make, “America a better place.” Such argument applies the economic logic to show how the nation would benefit from these economically (material) successful immigrants but at the same time, it also shows to the community how their model immigrant image is allowing them entry into the mainstream material structures. However, in the presented arguments the article erases other segments of the Asian Indian society who do not possess such material resources, and as such whose, immigrant stories do not match with the model minority success stories.

News articles also noted the benefits of the proposed reforms (DACA and DAPA) and how they would benefit the undocumented members of the community. For example, an article
in *India Post* reporting the proposed executive reforms (Mehta, 2014, December 4) noted that the proposed DACA reform would encompass a broader class of migrant youth. Therefore, more individuals from the community can access it. Similarly, the article specified that greater number of community members would benefit from the proposed DAPA reform as the eligibility criteria are greater than other previous reforms. A couple of other articles (IP, 2015, January 7; IP, 2014, December 4) also noted how the proposed reforms would benefit the undocumented immigrants of the community. However, such arguments were placed in the lower portion of the articles after the pro-reform arguments for the documented immigrants. Additionally, though the arguments acknowledge the presence of undocumented immigrants within the community, the myth of the model minority and the narrative of cultural exceptionalism (where their own community is presented as better than others) continued to predominate the ethnic newspapers’ representation of their own community.

As noted representation of undocumented immigrants were less prominent in *India Post*. In the few articles that supported reforms the arguments predominantly used “undocumented immigrant” in conjunction with competing labels like “relief” and “background check” as they supported immigration reform (IP, 2015, March 24; Mehta, 2014, December 4, Shah, 2015, March 15). For example, an article describing the proposed initiative stated, “*The relief (including work authorization) will now last for three years rather than two...These individuals will need to undergo a background check for relevant national security*” (Mehta, 2014, December 4). The description presented in the news discourse show contending perspective where immigration reform is argued to give “relief” as it will give them “work authorization,” to the undocumented immigrants, but the emphasis on the background check implicitly portrays that the call for relief is only for undocumented immigrants with a clean record. This implies the
acceptance of the dominant logic of relating undocumented immigrants with criminality, and representing such migrants in negative terms. However, in the call for reform for the undocumented community member the article presents them as individuals who “entered the United States before the age of 16” (Shah, 2015, March 15) or are individuals who “have children who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents” (Mehta, 2014, December 4). This suggests the implicit claim that though a few members of the community are undocumented, they are apparently the victim of circumstances and not criminals. Further, these arguments utilize the logic of family relation and the need to unite with the family members or the need to sympathize with migrants who came in as children (presenting a humanistic argument). The strategy thereby shows the interaction of multiple discourses where the community attempt to hold on to their community’s image, simultaneously acknowledging the presence of undocumented immigrants within the community, however, presenting them as not harmful.

Further, it should be noted that detailed descriptions of the proposed reforms in India Post also continuously emphasized the benefits of the reforms to Asian Indian community members, through phrases like “Indian community,” “South Asian community,” or “our community.” Some of the news articles completely lacked any reference to other immigrants, as it presented the pro-reform arguments. This exclusion implicitly shows the community’s tendency to avoid association with other immigrants. Other news reports also presented similar group favoritism in the representation of their own community members and other immigrants or minorities, where community member voices’ were represented to highlight the need for educating community members about the proposed reforms. Except for the mentioned single article, representation of other immigrant groups was also largely missing from the pro-reform arguments. As scholars (Das Gupta, 2006; Prashad, 2000) have noted within the Asian Indian
community, association with other immigrant or minority communities are predominantly avoided fearing that such connections (specifically with Latinos or African Americans) will tarnish the community’s image. Therefore, lack of mention of other immigrant groups can be argued to imply their disinterest in presenting linkages with others and thereby to legitimize their positionality as deserving immigrants.

As previously noted only one article in India Post presented a few other immigrant groups and noted the need for the Asian Indian community to unite with the others. The article covering the community members meeting with their Council man drew attention to Councilman Ash Kalra’s call, who emphasized the need to “create bridges between the Indian community and other large communities, such as the Latino and Vietnamese-American communities... [as] there is a lot we can learn from each other and a lot of help we can give one another as we continue to make America our home in growing numbers” (IP, 2015, March 30). The Councilman explicitly mentions other immigrant groups like “Latino and Vietnamese America” emphasizing the need to unite with other immigrants who go through the similar process of adjustment in their newly immigrated country. The use of pronouns, “we” and “our” demonstrates the inclusion of the immigrants by the community elite, which legitimizes the claim to unite with immigrants who go through similar experiences in their immigrated country. Further, as it explicates the need to establish relations with other immigrant groups the news implicitly emphasizes the struggles immigrants go through in their process of adjustment to the new land. However, other than Latino and Vietnamese American communities any other immigrant groups or minorities were not mentioned. Based on the demographic distribution of the area served by the India Post (India Post, n.d.), it can be argued that this finding explicates the immediate geographical context, where immigrants from different countries reside as
neighbors, which influences their relation with other immigrants and shapes how immigrants and immigration reform are represented and how relevant issues pertinent to the locale are covered.

The pro-reform arguments in *India Bulletin* and *India Post* presented pro-reform arguments for both documented and undocumented immigrants within the community. However, findings show how documented immigration was preferred more (by presenting prospective immigrant through a material and economic terms) as it can help legitimize the community’s existing image of the model minority. Further, the analysis shows how most of the articles excluded representation of other immigrant groups and presented reform as necessary to only their own community. Only one article in India Post presented two other immigrant communities, thereby showing how local context influence representation in an ethnic newspaper. Further, the findings suggest that though the newspapers recognize the presence of class-based differences within the community, the image of model minority (promoted by post-1965 immigrants) still continues to hold back the community from making connections with other immigrant communities.

**Representation of immigrants in India Abroad and India West.** News articles from *IA* and *IW* were more explicitly represented other immigrants and also articulated commonality between Asian Indians and other immigrant groups than the other two newspapers. The articles specifically named certain other immigrant groups, such as Latinos, immigrants from middle eastern countries and other Southeast Asian countries, along with their own community arguing for reforms to would provide these immigrants their basic human rights. Further, the presence of model minority discourse in the news articles was significantly less than the other two newspapers. The presence of the model minority discourse in a couple of articles show the newspapers attempt to represent the different views present in the community.
A few articles (4) published in *India Abroad* and *India West* presented immigration reform predominantly through the model minority discourse and the economic discourse. The four articles covered the perspectives of Asian Indian community members who were running or plan to run for political offices. In these four articles irrespective of the immigrants’ country of origin, the arguments presented in these articles used the word “legal” to emphasize that the path to citizenship should be for documented immigrants only. Undocumented immigrants, on the other hand, were represented as “illegal immigrants,” and nativist discourse was used, which criminalized undocumented immigrants as law-breakers. For example, an article covering Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal’s stance on immigration reform, Jindal is quoted asserting that right to citizenship is contingent on “assimilation” and “who want to come here, they need to come here legally. They need to learn English, adopt our values, roll up their sleeves and get to work” (Haniffa, 2015, August 14). The quote emphasizes that immigration should be contingent on the dominant definition of acceptance. The terms of acceptance emphasize assimilation (adopting values of the dominant society) and immigrants’ willingness to work hard thereby reiterating the American allegory of hard work and perseverance and representing how migrants are successful. However, though the article represents Jindal’s perspectives, it presented Jindal as the “far right conservative” who “as expected didn’t make the cut for the first debate of GOP…” The representation of Jindal as far right conservative and the use of the phrase “as expected” implicitly shows that the newspaper used his perspective only to detail the news. Another article in *IA* covering the Asian Indian immigrants running for the U.S. Congress presents Republican candidate Mary Thomas’s position on immigration reform, “They’ve [illegal immigrants] broken the law. They need to go through the proper processes to become American citizens just like my parents did — just like millions of other legal immigrants did. There’s a unique process we have
to becoming a citizen and it’s only appropriate for everyone to go through that process” (Haniffa, 2015, August 14). Here also in the represented quote acceptance is linked to legality, where the Asian Indian political leader utilizes her personal story (reiterating the success story) to emphasize the importance of legal immigration. Through such strategy, she creates a negative imagery of undocumented immigrants as criminals who not only break the law by coming in illegally but also cut in front of legal immigrants who wait in line for their legal turn to become a citizen. However, similar to the previous article, this article also represents the contending candidate as someone who has “taken a hardline against illegal and undocumented immigrants, even childhood arrivals,” thereby implying a different perspective of immigration reform than the presented voice.

Through such representation, the articles show how certain segments of the Asian Indian community continue to reaffirm the American ideology of meritocracy, individual achievement by reconstructing the image of an ideal immigrant. However, the presence of very few such arguments in the newspapers implies the newspaper’s basic strategy to cover all perspective on immigration reform. Additionally, such arguments were often “pushed down”, i.e., they were presented after the supporting views and were given less space or were accompanied by a somewhat positive counter argument.

A similar tendency was reflected in the two articles published in India West. An article reporting on the Asian Indian Americans’ reaction to Obama’s proposal for undocumented immigrants, represented competing perspective on immigration reform (Sohrabji, 2014, November 24). The article used labels “undocumented immigrants” along with “freeing people from imminent deportation,” and in support of immigration reform. However, another perspective was also presented, where undocumented immigrants were labeled as “illegal
immigrants” and appeal for a path for citizenship was countered by specifying it as “unfair.” For example, the article quoted Harmeet Dhillon, vice chair of the California Republic Party, who decried the DACA/DAPA proposal noting, “We do not believe it is appropriate to grant amnesty within our borders to people who broke the law to get here… it was unfair to people who were waiting in line.” The quote replicated the nativist discourse constructed by the mainstream and did not consider undocumented immigrants as deserving rights. The article presented community members’ reaction to the proposed executive reforms, where this quote was cited as one of them. However, the quote was presented in the later portion of the article after the perspective of immigration advocates who favored the proposal. Another article reporting on the House of Representative’s blocking of the immigration initiative quoted an Asian Indian American attorney who specified, “immigration reform programs should acknowledge that the U.S. economy is dependent on migrant labor, and advocated for a guest-worker program. Your average American doesn’t want to pick crops and there should be a place for such laborers, but not citizenship” (Sohrabji, 2014, December 9). The immigrant voice presented in the article notes the need for migrant laborers who would do the menial jobs, but the represented voice argues that these laborers contribution did not justify granting them any rights, as such migrants are “law breakers who entered the country illegally.” The quoted voice presents ambiguity regarding undocumented immigration, where at one hand it acknowledges the importance of undocumented immigrants but are at the same time describes them as criminal as they enter the country illegally. Such perspective signifies how certain segments of the community accept dominant perspective of legality in order to legitimize their positionality. However, here as well the article presented the perspective after appeals favoring undocumented immigrants. Also, the quote was followed by an appeal for a comprehensive reform that would present a long-term
solution to the immigration problems, instead of a temporary fix, thereby further, undermining the argument presented in the mentioned quote.

The two mentioned articles published in India Abroad presented the other views of immigration present within the community, while in India West the competing argument was presented in order to cover the community’s reaction to the executive reform initiative, where nativist argument was placed lower in the article giving it lesser prominence. It can be argued that these arguments did appear in the news articles to construct balance and as evidence of mixed views. Also, the newspapers serve diverse communities and clearly have to represent and appeal to different views. However, predominantly news articles in India Abroad and India West explicitly articulated commonality between Asian Indians and other immigrant groups as they argued for reforms to provide immigrants their basic human rights, thereby discrediting the model minority ideology that represents the community as unique and separate from other immigrants and minorities.

The articles published in the newspapers presented an inclusive image of immigrants and presented voices of immigration advocates and organizations who supported reform and emphasized the need to provide the immigrants basic human rights. A story published in IA in September 2015, titled “South Asian Americans have much to be concerned about” talks about the future of immigration reform and how that would affect the community. The story covered a protest rally near a Detention Center in Pennsylvania. It presented voices of immigration activists and family members of detained undocumented immigrants showing them as deprived of basic human rights. In this article the appeal for immigration reform was not restricted to Asian Indians only, instead, immigration advocate group SAALT presented “South Asian, Latino, Arab, Muslim immigrants” as needing reform. The article specified, “All immigrant communities
deserve a pathway to citizenship, the opportunity to remain with their families, the ability to work and pursue an education, and relief from deportation and criminalization” (Haniffa & Jha, 2015, September 25). The article demanded a pathway to citizenship for “all immigrant communities” advocating for their rights, such as their right to work and education, their family right and their right as basic human beings. However, in this claim for rights for all immigrants, the article repeatedly named only Latino immigrants who are predominantly portrayed negatively by the mainstream. This strategy implies an attempt to counter dominant perspective of undocumented immigrants instead of separating out from the other immigrants to legitimize the community’s position as a model minority. Further, the article noted that in the current election cycle the circulating narrative of “Un-American and racist comments remind us how interests and indeed the future of Asian and Latino immigrants are inextricably linked.” The article through the phrase “Un-American and racist comments” explicates the history of discrimination faced by immigrants and uses such commonalities between Asian and Latino immigrant experiences (discriminatory experiences) to calls for a unified front (uniting people from both communities) to fight for a “common-sense, lasting immigration reform.” As noted, such strategy implies going against the mainstream. However, it should also be noted though the article mentioned the Arab and Muslim immigrants only once and these groups were never mentioned again, which can be argued to be a way to holds back from favoring “Muslims” who are now perceived by the dominant society more negatively than the Latino immigrants.

Another news article in IA reporting on the ongoing race and immigration debate criticized the GOP discourse about immigration (Shamasunder, 2015, September, 4). The article specified that the Latinos have already stood up against the degradation of Latino communities and immigrants and now Asian immigrants are utilizing social media as a platform to stand up
against anti-immigration rhetoric. In this article also the journalist emphasizes how a coalition of different immigrant community is required to create a united front. The call for unity explicitly represented the Latino community’s success of fighting against mainstream injustice in order to mobilize their own community members. Such strategy does not show any preference to the Asian Indian community, instead, this approach is highlighted as needed to fight for immigrants “...basic civil rights.” Further, in the call to safeguard “civil rights of immigrant communities” and to “protect immigrant workers from exploitation” the article emphasized the need to “uphold our nation’s most sacred values of family, community.” The use of these noted phrases shows the presence of discursive ambiguity in the call to protect immigrants’ rights. This is because the article presents a liberatory stand in the claim to fight against mainstream injustices, however, with the use of the pronoun “our” the newspaper presents themselves as part of the nation, that preaches “sacred values of family, community,” thereby weakens the argument for protest. Additionally, the article specifies that considering the present socio-political scenario, “This is a critical moment for pivotal conversations about race, immigration, and the issues of diversity and equality that urgently impact our nation. In the year ahead, it is the time to discuss how immigration policy impacts Latino, black, Asian, and other immigrants and their families.” The journalist presents multiple pressing problems that need to be addressed nationally. The call argues against class and race-based discrimination and narrow nationalistic ideology affecting the immigrants and minorities with the apparent intention of transforming unjust social relations. However, the article continues to use the pronoun “our” thereby marking themselves (Asian Indians) as part of the dominant community and simultaneously the phrase “it is the time to discuss” immigration policy in relation to “Latino, black, Asian, and other immigrants” constructs the readers, Asian Indian Americans, as part of the mainstream, who should step up
A few articles in *IW* in their pro-reform arguments presented immigrants as a homogenized entity. For example, an immigration advocate is quoted in a news article in *IW*, who specifies, “Our nation and our communities continue to need just and inclusive immigration reform legislation that includes a pathway to citizenship, keeps families together and expands economic opportunity for all aspiring Americans. We remain committed to that ultimate goal” (Sohrabji, 2015, August 12). The article does not categorize immigrants as Asian Indians, Latinos, etc. Instead, undocumented immigrants are represented as an all-inclusive entity, who suffer similar plights, like family separation, economic oppression, and employment based oppression. This implies the presence of a progressive discourse that supports reform for all immigrants, however, at the same time it applies dominant logic as it argues for reform to provide “economic opportunity for all aspiring Americans.” A few other news articles also similarly presented immigrants as a homogeneous unit. A news report on immigration debate presented the perspective of an Indian American activist, Manju Kulkarni, who said, “It is a signal to all immigrants. One party is showing its disdain for all immigrants and not recognizing the contributions they make to our communities” (Sohrabji, 2015, March 5). The article presents a perspective on the Congress’s opposition to comprehensive immigration reform. In the pro-reform arguments, the article specifies that the Congress fails to see how the immigrants contribute to the society. Therefore, the activist appeals to all immigrant communities to stand up for their rights. This article also does not address immigrant groups separately instead refers to them using the umbrella term “all immigrants.” The assumption of homogeneity perpetuates the perspective that all members of these groups are suffering due to their lack of basic human rights. Therefore, this categorization presents a need to disrupt the dominant state-endorsed
immigration politics where the right to work, family, is contingent on the immigrants’ economic contribution, and material resources, like education, skills, etc. These examples show that instead of remaining silent under the constructed cloak of model minorities, a few of the news articles challenge the dominant notion of belonging. These arguments recognize the importance of countering the notion that undocumented immigrants have no rights and have no rightful claims of belonging in their new homeland.

The representation in the four newspapers explicated the presence of different, sometimes competing, pro-reform arguments. While a few of them presented immigration reform as a community issue, highlighted the need to promote reforms for the materialistically successful immigrants, others did not highlight the model minority perspective as such, instead presented it as a view of immigration present within the community. These contestations show the presence of the hegemonic perspective of immigrants, which feeds the model minority image favored by certain segments of the community. However, simultaneously other segments within the community also present perspectives that attempt to focus on marginalized immigrants’ silenced, invisible realities. The next section details how different sections of the Asian Indian community interact with the dominant definition of belonging and acceptance.

**Countering the myth of model minority.** A few news articles presented arguments and represented voices that critiqued Asian Indians engagement with the model minority ideology. These articles reported that Asian Indians relate un-documentation to criminality and are apprehensive in acknowledging undocumented immigration as their community issue. Additionally, the articles noted that undocumented immigration is presented mainly as a problem prevalent among other immigrant groups.
A few news articles were more explicitly in countering the model minority myth. These arguments specifically emphasized the negative effect of the myth, noting how it was creating division within the community. For example, an article in IW reporting the protests against the court order on President Obama’s immigration executive specified that undocumented immigrants are predominantly perceived in negative terms within the Asian Indian community. It quotes an immigration activist stating “people without proper papers are seen as law-breakers” (Sohrabji, 2015, February 25). The article notes that within the Asian Indian community, undocumented status is associated with criminality. This description acknowledges how segments of the community have adopted the dominant logic that relates undocumented immigrants to criminality. Consequently, the article notes that undocumented immigrants often encounter resentment from their own community members, like, “Stand in line and come over like the rest of us, is an often refrain heard by undocumented Indian residents” (IW, 2015, February 25). The article notes how the community has adopted and use the mainstream catch phrase “Stand in line and come over like the rest of us,” to criticize Asian Indian undocumented migrants. A phrase which is predominantly used to rebuke undocumented immigrants from Mexico and Central Americas. Further, the article notes that undocumented immigrants are looked down upon by other community members as it taints the community’s reputation as ideal minority. The journalist notes that often the fear of this stigma holds back undocumented members of the community to come out and access the available benefits for undocumented immigrants.

A few news articles have also noted how undocumented migration are not identified as a community problem among Asian Indian Americans. A news article described that within the Asian Indian communities, undocumented immigration is perceived negatively (IP, 2015,
The argument noted the repeated use of labels such as “undocumented” or “illegal immigrants” in conjunction with immigrants from “Latin America,” and “Central America.” Such criticism highlights the newspaper’s recognition how certain segments of the community align with the dominant notion of immigrants. Another article in *IW* (2015, February 25) describes that “undocumented immigrants are largely identified as Latinos by the Indian American community.” The article presents how certain segments of the community do not perceive undocumented immigration as their own community problem and typically relate illegality to Latino immigrants. This description critiques the tendency to adopt the dominant ideology of migrants, whereby Mexican immigrants or Latinos are predominantly labeled as undeserving. The journalist explains that this perspective is increasing the gap among the documented and undocumented immigrants and other immigrant communities. These news articles acknowledge that segments with the Asian Indian community relate illegality with Latina American immigrants and as such maintain distance from such immigrants. However, such acknowledgment by the newspapers implies the presence (or emergence) of a progressive discourse, where segments of the community are realizing the need to counter the dominant perspective.

A few of the news articles also presented arguments specifying how the model minority myth negatively affect certain segments of the community. The arguments presented phrases that specified that the model minority image “hurt” or “exploit” segments of the population with the community. For example, an article in *India Post* specified that a significant proportion of the immigrant population within the community suffer as the model minority myth erases the stories of the not-so successful immigrants. Voices of immigration advocates are represented, who specify that the perception of model minority “hurts us- our ethnic communities have varied...”
needs” (IP, 2015, August 5). This argument emphasizes the need to recognize the class, skill, and education based diversity within the community. The article notes that often based on education, skills, and material resources segments within the community have divergent experiences. However, promoting the image of the community as a singular, homogeneous, problem free group thereby erases class exploitation and oppression faced by the working class migrants from the community and as such any need such migrants to have a legitimate place. Another article presents similar concern regarding the model minority myth and noted the need to stop promoting the exceptionalism. An immigration activist was represented, who stated that exceptionalism leads to,

“diminishing or excluding the experiences of people who might not have the same opportunities because they’re from working class communities or they’re undocumented or they’re limited English speakers? Are we lifting up those success narratives because we’re trying to say we’re better than other people of color? It’s important to ask these questions when we hear those kinds of terms to make sure that we’re not giving in to that narrative of cultural exceptionalism and letting it exploit our own community” (Babu, 2015, November 6).

The quote presents a perspective that urges the need to stop using the ideology of exceptionalism, predominantly used to promote the Asian Indian community. This ideology promotes the image of uniqueness in order to separate out from the others who have failed to show such unique characteristics. According to scholars the Asian Indian mainstream specifically promotes the image of exceptionalism, where the community members are uniformly represented as hardworking, meticulous, enterprising, who adhere to their traditional value of family ties, respect, and obedience (Das Gupta, 2006, Saran, 1985). As the article notes, such
ideology is used to present the community members as successful, deserving, and as such “better than other people of color.” However, the article admits that the promotion of the narrative of “cultural exceptionalism” to represent Asian Indians as better than other immigrants is backfiring and harming the ethnic community as it is excluding the less privileged members of the community. This explicit critique of model minority ideology presented in these articles shows a progressive attempt by a few of the ethnic newspapers to counter the dominant representation of their ethnic community and to redefine cultural belonging for their members.

The examination of ethnic media discourse shows that the immigrants are not represented in any particular way, such as a unified entity, or better immigrants etc. The representations are instead non-coherent and largely varied as they are constantly reconstituted discursively within a specific context or through an oppressive hegemonic ideology. The analysis of immigration reform arguments demonstrates the dynamic nature of discourse as it reaffirms or challenges dominant ideology.

**Conclusion**

The discursive strategies used by the ethnic newspapers to argue for immigration reform often reaffirms certain logics of the dominant civic discourse. The arguments in the four ethnic newspaper often work along the same logical line as the logics of capitalism and denial of class and race-based differences. The analysis shows there are a substantial amount of contradiction in the ethnic news discourses, which as Fairclough (1990) asserts can be primarily argued to be due to the heterogeneity of language use. Also, the representation of immigrants shows ambiguity in claims regarding undocumented migrant, how they are constructed, whether they deserve the “right to have rights.” Due to the presence of such contradiction and ambiguity the ethnic media discourse fails to be an outlaw discourse. Further, it weakens the claims of immigration reform
for undocumented immigrants and as it lacks the power to generate a strong opposition to the dominant logics. So, in other words, even if the arguments appear to be supporting the undocumented immigrant cause, they rely on specific assumptions that economic improvement can improve the immigrant condition and this reproduces, in large part, the racist logic of the dominant culture by omitting and suppressing exclusion, oppression, and discrimination. As the discourse inadvertently allows for a reconstruction and reification of dominant logics, but from a different direction, it fails to become an outlaw discourse. Instead, the arguments in the newspapers do precisely what racist logic intends: in its opposition to social change, it reestablishes the racist assumptions of the state, even while superficially it appears to be opposing such assumptions (Ono & Sloop, 2002).
CHAPTER 4

IMMIGRATION REFORMS IN EDITORIALS, OPINION COLUMNS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Immigration reform was presented as an important topic in the editorials, opinion columns and letters to the editor published in the ethnic newspapers. Fifteen editorials, twenty-eight opinion columns and forty-two letters to the editor presented arguments on immigration reforms. Editorials are statements of the paper’s editorial policy and orientation. An editorial is written and agreed on by the editors and business managers. An opinion column is written by a single contributing columnist; who may be an outside contributor or in a few cases, one of the newspaper’s own columnists (Bender et al., 2011). A letter to the editor is written by a reader who wants to share an opinion with others readers and is selected by the editor for publication. In this chapter, I present the analysis of editorials, opinion columns and letters to the editor because all of them are published at the discretion of the editorial board and are thereby necessarily edited based on the paper’s editorial policy and orientation. This chapter, therefore, presents arguments on immigration reforms published in the editorials, opinion columns and the letters to the editor, specifically focusing on the logics that informed these arguments.

Editorials and Opinion Column

Data analysis shows that similar to news articles published in the four Asian Indian ethnic newspapers, all editorials (15) and all opinion columns (28) supported immigration reform. The editorials supported both legal and undocumented immigrants and only one specifically argued for the need to revise immigration reforms for workers who work in the high-tech industries. Ethnic media scholars have noted that ethnic media function as an educator, informing their community about mainstream issues (Matsaganis et al., 2011; Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009;
This was particularly evident in all the newspapers, however, editorials in *India Bulletin* specified only how the community members would benefit from the proposed initiatives. The editorials in the other newspapers presented reforms as necessary for both the community and other immigrants and minorities, though a few specifically emphasized the need for reforms for documented immigration. Further, in the case of undocumented immigrants, a few editorials argued against the mainstream’s tendency to represent immigrants as criminals. However, some of the presented arguments applied dominant ideas and logics of rights and belonging. The following sections will detail the different perspectives presented in the editorials and the opinion column.

**Editorials and opinion column in India Abroad, India Post and India West**

Editorials and opinion column in the newspapers (except *India Bulletin*) openly called out to recognize the need for immigration reform, praised the proposed executive immigration policies, and urged the anti-immigrant proponents to identify the benefit of immigration reform. However, in a few of these calls more emphasis was given to documented immigrants (indicated through explicit use of labels like “documented,” or “legal”) by placing such calls in the first few paragraphs (40 percent), and in others prominence was given to the need for reforms for the undocumented immigration (60 percent).

**Emphasis on documented immigration.** Editorials and opinion columns highlighted the need to revise the current immigrant system, specifically noting the shortcomings of the existing system. An editorial titled, “At Last, Sensible Immigration Reform May Have a Chance in Washington” published in *India West*, described the shortcomings of the current visa system and how it is affecting the community members. The editorial starts off specifying how the stalled immigration reform has “taken a toll on the country’s economic growth and global
The editorial advocates for immigration reform specifying, “Ideally, we would have one comprehensive immigration-reform bill and solve all the problems at once. But as we have seen in the past six years, this isn’t going to happen. The best hope is that we can get several sensible immigration bills passed that fix all the critical problems that put this nation’s competitiveness back on track” (IW, 2015, February 25).

The editorial describes the need for a comprehensive immigration reform. As it blamed the system for the failure to implement an all-inclusive, comprehensive reform and urged for several “sensible” reforms, it constructed immigration in economic terms (similar to the mainstream logic of representing immigration). This is highlighted in the phrases like “sensible immigration bills” are needed to “fix all the critical problems that put this nation’s competitiveness back on track.” This description presents the nation suffering in the competitive market, therefore aligning with the mainstream logic for immigration. Additionally, this alignment is explicated in the editorial’s presented solution where it specifies the need for reforms for the students (getting a higher degree in STEM area), and high skilled and educated immigrants on temporary employment visas to resolve the nation’s issue of competitiveness. It should be noted here that such strategy not only implies an alignment with the mainstream ideology but also the image of the prospective immigrants (as educated and skilled) becomes more powerful in persuading the community (Asian Indian Americans who came in through similar terms) to support them. Further, the editorial’s note to “put this nation’s competitiveness back on track” and call for
reforms for skilled and educated immigrants presents these prospective immigrants as the savior who would set the nation “back on track” like the way the skilled and educated immigrants (news readers) did back in their time. All through the editorial phrases such as “immigrants with advanced degrees,” “skilled immigrants,” “advanced STEM-degree holders,” and “persons with extraordinary ability” were used to represent documented immigrants. These phrases continuously highlighted the material worth of these immigrants and as such demonstrate the newspaper’s alignment with the mainstream. It can be argued that instead of contending mainstream logics of immigrant acceptance such strategy is stretching the boundaries of oppression, which delegitimizes other immigrant and minorities.

Editorials in other newspapers also specified the need for documented migration. An editorial in India Post describes how President Obama’s proposed executive actions on immigration would support the “high-skilled business and workers” (IP, 2014, December 4). The editorial notes the actions will “better enable U.S. businesses to hire and retain highly skilled foreign-born workers and strengthen and expand opportunities for students to gain on-the-job training.” The editorial presents the benefit of immigration in economic terms throughout emphasizing how U.S. businesses and “highly skilled foreign-born workers” would gain from each other. Capitalistic logic predominated such description as it represented reforms as economic need. It should be noted here recent Asian Indian migrants predominantly come in through employment or student visas, which are temporary visas, and due to the nature of such visas, the visa holders leave after the visa period is over. Therefore, capitalistic logic was presented to argue for providing the immigrants their rights and opportunities to work. Additionally, these editorials in their pro-reform appeal created an equivalence with the mainstream by using the pronoun “our” such as “our nation,” “our economy” as they emphasize
how the reform is necessary to both the nation and the immigrants. This logic as such presents the newcomers as deserving immigrants to the Asian Indian American community members, who themselves claimed their belonging through privileged material terms. Further, these editorials do not specifically identify or name their community members neither explicitly exclude any other immigrant communities or minorities. However, the use of the dominant capitalistic logic excludes other migrants who are working class, less skilled, less educated migrants.

Further, in a few of the editorials (40 percent) arguments for documented immigrants were emphasized more by allocating more space, and placing it in the first and second paragraphs of the editorial. For example, in an editorial in India West arguments claiming the need for reforms for immigrants in the employment-based categories were more prominent, whereas the need to “strengthen our humanitarian immigration system” (IW, 2015, February 25) for undocumented immigrants was presented only in the last paragraph. The editorial emphasizes the need for reform in order to “slow the skilled immigrant exodus that is in progress.” The editorial used economic logic to argue for a long-term solution for such immigrants, who were represented as “STEM-degree holders,” “skilled immigrants,” and “persons with extraordinary ability.” Use of such label not only reiterated the dominant terms of immigrant acceptance, it also resonated well with the Asian Indian Americans who came in through such terms. The editorial allocated majority of the space to present such arguments for documented migrants (7 paragraphs out of 8), however, as noted these editorials also presented claims for undocumented immigrant (in the last paragraph out of 8 paragraphs). The argument for undocumented migrants specifies, “There is also an urgent need to enact the DREAM Act and to afford the undocumented provisional legal status…Their approval by Congress is necessary so that these
immigrants can stop living in fear of being deported and can start paying taxes. The DREAM Act is a human-rights issue” (IW, 2015, February 25). The editorial in the pro-reform argument for undocumented migrants claims the need to grant the immigrants’ rights to live without the fear of deportation, however, it simultaneously argues for a “provisional legal status,” instead of arguing for a long-term solution. The editorial articulates dominant logic of immigrant acceptance in its argument for reform, which only grants temporary rights to the undocumented migrants. Further, the use of the adverb “also” implies the secondary importance allocated to such arguments. Therefore, even though calls for reform were presented to the community members (the newspaper’s readers) the argument for a “provisional” status for the undocumented migrants made the argument less important, thereby further giving more prominence to documented immigration than undocumented migration. A few other editorials also gave more prominence in pro-reform calls for documented immigration than arguments for undocumented migrants. For example, an editorial in India Post (2014, December 4) highlighted the need to expedite the path to citizenship for highly skilled and educated immigrants, whereas simply presented how the eligibility for deferred actions will be evaluated on a case by case basis, where “each individual will undergo a background check of relevant national security and criminal databases, including DHS and FBI databases” and emphasized that “they may then apply for work authorization, provided they pay a fee.” The discussion explicates the process through which the deferred action applicants must go. However, the description gives a dry account of the rigorous process undocumented immigrants must go through to prove their innocence, and does not question the process. Such strategy implicitly shows the approval of the dominant terms of immigration instead of emphasizing the need for the immigrants to have access to basic human rights. Additionally, the editorial does not question the necessity of the background check
or the fee, and normalizes the proposed practices, thereby the newspaper accepted those exclusionary terms as a way to establish their inclusion into the mainstream by silently approving the dominant perceptions and ideals.

While the editorials and opinion columns predominantly called for immigration reform for documented/undocumented immigrants, two opinion column (published in India Abroad and India West) presented reforms as necessary to support only the documented immigrants. The columns used labels “legal” or “documented” as they argued for reforms and did not make any claims for reforms for undocumented immigrants within or outside the community. An opinion column in India Abroad specifies,

“Improving mobility for immigrant workers would give them more power to bargain for higher salaries and better conditions, and the upward pressure on their wages will mean higher wages for American workers as well. But the bigger dividends will come if these workers are given the freedom to unleash their entrepreneurial spirit. More than 25 percent of our country’s high tech companies started between 1995 and 2005 have an immigrant founder. These include companies like Google, Yahoo, EBay, Instagram, and Tesla. These companies have contributed billions of dollars every year to the US economy. We need more of these immigrant success stories. Easing the rules to allow employment-based immigrants the option of obtaining a work permit is one way to move the odds in our favor” (Siskind, 2015, November 13).

The columnist specifies how employment based reform for documented immigration can be beneficial to all, such as Asian Indian immigrants, American workers, businesses and the U.S. economy. The column highlights the prospects in economic terms by providing examples of how an increase in wage would help increase American workers’ wages, and “bigger dividends” can
be obtained if the immigrant worker’s entrepreneurial spirits are invoked. It should be noted here that the description applies dominant logic as it represents immigrants in terms of economic value, and calls for rights for immigrants who are caught up in the problems of the employment-based immigration system. Additionally, the column specifies the need for more attention on the employment-based immigration problems and critiques media’s tendency to focus mostly on the problems of migrants without legal status, thereby creating a marked distinction between documented and undocumented immigrants. Through crude terms (like media critique) the column spelled out the exclusion of the undocumented immigrants in order to claim the inclusion of documented migrants. Such strategy implies an attempt to hold on to the image of the community as consisting of highly educated, skilled, successful migrants and emphasizing the recent migrants as possessing similar qualities specifies how the recent group of migrants would continue the legacy of the predecessors. However, in the arguments for rights for the documented migrants the columnist did not account for the miserable conditions of employment based immigrants, whose visas are dependent on their employer, therefore, they are continuously exploited by their employers. Also, it did not consider the discrimination faced by documented workers as they try to establish themselves in the U.S. through their hard work and perseverance. The argument founded on material success, therefore urged the readers (community members) to come out and support immigrants, who are in similar position as they were during their initial days after immigration. At the same time, lack of arguments for undocumented migrants further creates a gap between the citizens, the documented members, and the undocumented members of the community.

The other opinion column also articulated immigrant success story while arguing for the need for reform for the documented immigrants. The column titled “Indian Immigrants: It’s
“Obvious the American Dream Is Alive and Well” (Wadhwa, 2015, August 24) published in India West notes,

“Even though the prosperity isn’t evenly distributed, and some segments of the Indian community face severe social and economic problems, it is notable that the median annual income of U.S. households headed by an Indian immigrant is $103,000 — twice the U.S. median. The greatness of America is that a person who achieves success commands the highest level of respect regardless of his or her background, race and religion. This is the American Dream: an ethos of freedom that provides anyone who achieves success through hard work with the opportunity for prosperity and equality. There are no absolute barriers to upward social mobility in America...So when South Asians come to the United States, they learn very quickly to put their differences aside. They begin to understand that the key to an individual’s — and a community’s — success is to network, learn, and help each other... The lessons that disadvantaged groups can learn from Indian immigrants are to help each other and “pay it forward.” America shows the world that providing all people with equal opportunity makes a bigger economic pie; that diversity fuels innovation and economic growth” (Wadhwa, 2015, August 24).

The opinion column employs several different ideologies, such as the myth of meritocracy, model minority and the denial of race, class, religion based distinctions while arguing the need to support documented immigration. The argument acknowledges the presence of social and economic problems among certain segments of the community, and also admits racial prejudices faced by the Asian Indian immigrants in the U.S. However, grounded on the dominant ideology of ‘American Dream,’ which nurtures the model minority myth, the columnist articulates how
Asian Indians have succeeded in the U.S. irrespective of adversities. Further, the columnist specifies that in spite of demographic and class differences within the community the Asian Indians have succeeded by maintaining a united front within the community. The column applies the dominant ideology of exceptionalism to present themselves as ideal immigrants who irrespective of differences have made their place in the U.S. and calls for other unsuccessful minorities and immigrants to follow their strategy of success. As the column emphasizes the need for reform to continue support of documented high-skilled immigration, it erases the diversity within the Asian Indian immigrant community and silences problems, such as class exploitation, racism, and narrow nationalism present within and outside their communities.

Additionally, the column specifies that success comes through “network, learn, and help” and thereby reiterating the image of the model minority where immigrants are self-reliant and help each other instead of depending solely on state help. It should be noted here that the columnist is a Fellow at Stanford University and holds other distinguished positions in the U.S. and also India West’s circulation database indicates that the newspaper is primarily circulated in California’s Bay area, which is home to privileged Asian Indians. Therefore, as noted the column continued to ignore the presence of undocumented immigrants while holding on to the image of the model minority which was evident in the column’s representation of themselves to other "disadvantaged groups [who] can learn from Indian immigrants."

This two column represents that certain privileged section of the Asian Indian immigrant community do not recognize the importance of class and race-based social and economic problems present within the community. Instead, the columns continue to promote their community as the successful immigrant group erasing the stories that do not match their success stories. As such this strategy does not counter mainstream logics instead, it applies dominant
logics to present themselves as valuable immigrants and demand recognition as such by the mainstream.

The editorials and opinion column employed different (sometimes competing) logics in their pro-reform calls. While preference to documented immigration was widely evident, strong appeal for reform for undocumented immigrants was also present in a few of the editorials, which implies the presence of different ideologies with the Asian Indian ethnic community. The next sub-sub-section details the pro-reform arguments presented for undocumented immigrants.

**Emphasis on undocumented immigration.** A few editorials and opinion columns also argued the need for reforms for undocumented immigrants. These arguments presented undocumented immigrants as vulnerable and suffering and called for a need to support such migrants. Additionally, the editorials constructed an inclusive imagery of undocumented migrants (irrespective of their country of origin) as they presented their pro-reform arguments.

Representation of proposed or prospective reforms in *India Post* showed the presence of conflicting logic. This is because though the editorial or column supported reforms for undocumented immigrants, such calls applied dominant logics to present immigration and immigrants. For example, an editorial in *India Post* (2015, January 7) presented undocumented immigrants as a victim of circumstances, as large numbers came in as a child or immigrated to the U.S. to escape the violence in their home country. The editorial represents undocumented migrants as vulnerable and suffering as they predominantly came in as children “for other legitimate reasons, such as fleeing horrific gang persecution in countries such as Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.” The editorial used the phrase like “fleeing horrific gang persecution” to present the circumstances under which the children had to flee their homeland. Also, it used the phrase “legitimate reasons” to emphasize that severity of the situation. Through such
strategic representation, the editorial presents the undocumented immigrants as deserving support from the community. The editorial, therefore, articulates the need for a reform, “that is more effective and adaptable to the exigencies of the moment so that both the nation and the immigrants who have sacrificed all to write the next great chapter in the American story can benefit in full measure” (IP, 2015, January 15). The editorial calls for the implementation of an immigration reform that would be mutually beneficial to both the nation and the immigrants. It presents an image of suffering, thereby inviting a sympathetic reaction from the readers (the community members who are citizens of the country) to fight for such migrants. However, in the appeal for an all-inclusive reform though the article uses phrase like there is a need to recognize the “exigencies of the moment” for the “immigrants who have sacrificed all” to create an image of individuals who have forfeited everything as they escaped violence in their home country, the editorial calls for a measure that would benefit “both the nation and the immigrants.” As such in their apparent humanistic call, the newspaper applies dominant logic where acceptance is dependent on the national benefit. Similarly, an opinion column (Khatri, 2014, December 12) in favor of the proposed executive order emphasizes the need for such immigration reforms, specifically because such initiative would help the vulnerable undocumented migrants. The column specifies that “The executive actions taken by President Obama will help bring out of the shadows millions of undocumented immigrants who contribute a tremendous amount to our society and economy every day. The executive order is an important and long-overdue first step towards normalizing these people.” The columnist presents the immigration initiative by the President as beneficial to the undocumented immigrants. However, the phrases such as “bring out of the shadows” and “normalizing these people” presents the immigrants as not part of the original society. The proposed executive order is therefore presented as a solution to regularize
the functioning of the dominant society. Additionally, the phrase “contribute a tremendous amount to our society and economy every day” thereby presents a valid reason to accept such immigrants, who otherwise would present a challenge to the dominant society through their undocumented presence. In these editorials and columns, though suggested immigration initiatives for the documented immigrants were praised, more emphasis was given on the benefits of such initiative on undocumented immigration, thereby aligning with the mainstream who present undocumented immigrants as an outsider and not part of the perceived national imagery.

Additionally, one editorial in India Post supported reforms for undocumented immigrants by using examples of different court cases to argue against the court standing on the president’s executive order. The editorial specified that the lawsuit against the proposed executive reform is a waste of time and taxpayers’ money, specifically because the president has the legal right to decide the law that needs to be enforced. The writing states that the “deferred action is neither recent nor revolutionary” as it has been used previously in a few instances, such as for battered immigrants and for widows of U.S. citizens. The editorial uses extensive examples of court cases, like how “President Johnson’s exercise of discretion that allowed approx. 1 Million Cubans to be paroled” was received and dealt with by the other federal institutes etc. These examples were used to explicate why the attempt to annul the proposed reform would fail. The strategic use of previous court cases was present only in this editorial, however, in the examples provided the portrayal of how the dominant society stepped up to help the migrants present an implicit appreciation of the dominant society, who in many cases have stepped up to help the undocumented immigrants.
Further, a few of the editorials published in *India Abroad, India Post, and India West* called out against the criminalization of undocumented immigrants in their pro-reform arguments. These arguments critiqued the anti-reform perspectives that emerged in response to the president’s proposed immigration reforms, and also argued against the mainstream stereotypical representation of immigrants as a threat. An editorial in *India Post* (IP, 2015, January 7) noted that anti-reform proponents equate President Obama’s executive immigration actions as “taking illegal drugs or weapons that it had seized from smugglers and delivering them to the criminals who initially solicited their illegal importation/exportation.” The editorial uses words like “illegal drugs,” “weapons,” “smugglers” or “criminals” to present how the mainstream perceive the undocumented immigrants and how the anti-reform proponent view the reforms as supporting such negative activities. Providing such background context, the editorial then speaks out against such perspective arguing that “It is clear that DACA was not a driving force behind the migration... the violence in Central America and the need for a safe haven has what prompted these children to undertake the journey north.” The phrase that “DACA was not a driving force” counters the dominant notion that undocumented immigrants come to the U.S. to take advantage of the immigration policies. Instead, it emphasizes that “violence” and “need for safe haven,” are the reasons for their migration. Such description constructs an image of the migrants as vulnerable and opposes the dominant idea of immigrants as lawbreakers, who illegally cross the border to get to the U.S. Additionally, along with challenging anti-reform argument, by referring to the migrant as “children” the editorial used the logic of common humanity to appeal to the readers to support such immigrants, implicitly prompting that they deserve better as they are both vulnerable and victim of circumstances. A more recent editorial published in *IA* (2015, August 14) contends that immigrants are less likely than the native-born
to engage in criminal behaviors that would put them behind bars. It specifies that the immigration laws in the U.S. are redefining what counts as “criminal” in the case of immigrants. The editorial specifies “the overwhelming majority of immigrants are not “criminals” by any commonly accepted definition of the term. For this reason, harsh immigration policies are not effective in fighting crime.” The phrase “majority of immigrants are not “criminals” by any commonly accepted definition of the term” explicitly points out the fallacy in the mainstream system, where harsh policy measures are implemented based on the assumption the immigrants are criminals. Further, it points towards the “zero tolerance policy” implemented for immigrants who commit even the slightest offenses. This argument not only points at the failure of the system, which fails to fight crimes and as such protect its citizens, but also calls out on the dominant logics of citizenship and the American narrative of exclusion, which is frequently justified as national security. Such calls imply the possibility of challenging the dominant ideology.

Other editorials also called out the mainstream tendency to criminalize undocumented immigrants’, and emphasized the need to sympathize with the plights of these immigrants. In a two-part editorial report detailing the new plans for deferred action childhood arrivals, it is noted that reviewing the deportation and criminal statistics President Obama “acknowledged that deportations should be more humane, citing concern over a broken immigration system that separates families” (IA, 2015, February 20). The editorial explains how the president identified the need for a humane immigration system for the undocumented immigrants. The words “broken immigration system that separates families” emphasizes the lack of family rights, a value system that is strongly believed by the Asian Indian community, and therefore elucidate more the shortcomings of the current immigrant system. Further, it notes that about 152,000
immigrants have been deported who did not have any criminal conviction. The first part of the report used statistical data to describe the discursive criminalization of immigrants and explained how the actual numbers were inflated. Such numeric representation makes the argument more persuasive as it shows how numbers were exaggerated by the mainstream and as such challenges the mainstream representation of immigrants as criminals. The second part of the report (IA, 2015, February 27) specifies the contending arguments against the President’s proposed immigration initiative. The editorial notes the mainstream ambiguity regarding the president’s immigration initiatives, as he has both been labeled as “Deportation chief” (as during his Presidency the deportation numbers were the highest), and also called as being “lax on enforcement.” The editorial presented the label assigned to the president by the mainstream “Deportation chief” and the “lax on enforcement” together to show the controversy, however, it appeals to the president to look into the possibility of granting relief from deportation more than allowing “chance at citizenship” for the 11.7 million unauthorized immigrants, so that vulnerable undocumented immigrants can live peacefully. Through the editorial’s apparent criticism, it emphasizes the need to recognize the undocumented immigrants’ specifically projecting to the community members the need to grant the undocumented immigrants their family rights and their basic human rights. However, it should be noted that the appeal to support immigrants only suggests temporary fix, instead of a long-term solution, which can also be argued as an ambiguity within the community surrounding immigrant problems, who they realize as needing support (based on their immigrant history) but at the same time are unsure about granting long-term relief to the undocumented immigrants. Other editorials also published in India Abroad (IA, 2015, August 14) note that
“immigrants have the stigma of ‘criminality’ ascribed to them by an ever-evolving assortment of laws and immigration enforcement mechanisms... immigrants are being defined more and more as threats. Whole new classes of “felonies” have been created which apply only to immigrants, deportation has become a punishment for even minor offenses, and policies aimed at trying to end unauthorized immigration have been made more punitive rather than more rational and practical” (IA, 2015, August 14).

The editorial explains how undocumented immigrants are predominantly constructed through the narrative of threat, and how this has resulted in the implementation of stricter laws and mechanism to control undocumented immigration. It calls out to this practice describing the policies as “more punitive rather than more rational and practical.” The adjective “more” used to describe policies challenges the policies as impractical and irrational, thereby explicating a counter dominant logic. Further, it pronounces that the threat narrative and the corresponding concerns for security have made the lives of undocumented immigrants miserable and “not since the days of slavery have so many residents of the United States lacked the most basic social, economic, and human rights” (IA, 2015, August 14). The editorial equates the undocumented immigrants’ situation to slavery and presents them as deprived of rights. Representation of the undocumented immigrants as lacking “basic social, economic, and human rights” constructs an imagery of suffering that not only challenges the present immigration system but also calls for sympathy. Such appeals explicate that immigration policies should be practical and rational instead of depriving them of basic human rights.

Additionally, a couple of editorials also spoke out against the criminalization of documented immigrants (IA, 2015, August 14; IA, 2015 September 4). These editorials note that criminalization occurs for both legal immigrants and the unauthorized, regardless of their
country of origin or level of education, as immigration policies in the U.S. are frequently constructed and shaped by fear and stereotype than by empirical evidence. For example, the editorial in IA notes, “For more than a century, innumerable studies have confirmed two simple yet powerful truths about the relationship between immigration and crime: immigrants are less likely to commit serious crimes or be behind bars than the native-born, and high rates of immigration are associated with lower rates of violent crime and property crime” (IA, 2015, August 14). The editorial uses scholarly immigration studies to note that criminalization of immigration and increased law enforcement is not linked to higher crime rates, instead are the result of fears and prejudices against immigrants. References to such scholarly studies to critique the criminalization shows the editorial’s challenge against the mainstream narrative of criminalizing the immigrant. Additionally, the editorial notes that immigration policies are drafted based on stereotypes rather than reality and immigrants are labeled as “alien” using increasingly stringent definitions and standards of ‘criminality’ that do not apply to U.S. citizens. Such perspective presented in editorials indicate an attempt to raise awareness among Asian Indian Americans (newspaper’s target audience) about injustices. It also exemplifies an effort made by the newspaper to create a common ground among immigrants (irrespective of their legal status and country of origin), to mobilize the community members who are U.S. citizens to stand up and act against such unfairness.

Ono and Sloop as well as ethnic media scholars noted, ethnic (vernacular) discourses targeted towards particular group often raise consciousness about issues not addressed in mainstream media, such as citizenship rights and can be resistant to the dominant ideas and logic. Findings show that editorials presented undocumented immigrants as vulnerable and protested against the mainstream trend of criminalizing immigrants, thereby implying the
presence of counter-hegemonic discourse. However, the careful textual analysis shows that a few of the editorials in their protest against deportation highlights more on calls against “the banishment from the United States of lawful permanent residents who committed traffic offenses and who have U.S.-based families” (IA, 2015, September, 4). The editorial speaks out against injustice towards documented immigrants and shows clear preference over the undocumented other by explicitly using a label like “lawful permanent residents.” This discursive construction pushes away arguments for undocumented immigrants and thereby reiterates the dominant logics of inclusion and acceptance of immigrants. Another editorial notes a Pew Research survey “Relief from the threat of deportation is more important than a chance at citizenship to a majority (55 percent) of Hispanics” (IA, 2014, April 11). In the discursive presentation against criminalization, the article uses a study to indicate that even majority of the undocumented immigrants prefer relief from deportation instead of a “chance at citizenship.” This representation not only justifies and supports temporary reforms (like DACA) instead of long term solution (citizenship) and at the same time shows alignment with the dominant perception which typically links Hispanics to undocumented immigrants. The editorial’s alignment with the mainstream is made prominent in the following sentence which specifies that “About three-quarters of the nation’s 11.7 million unauthorized immigrants are Hispanic, according to Pew Research estimates.” This statement in an ethnic newspaper editorial shows the continuation of the dominant perception which predominantly presents Hispanics as undocumented and further, reconfirms the community’s perception that undocumented immigration is not their own community problem.
The editorials in *India Bulletin*, were different from the other newspapers as they were specifically focused on educating the community members about comprehensive immigration reform and how it would affect them. This newspaper is specifically separated out from the other three as it represented only their community members while erasing the presence of any other immigrants or minorities. These editorials repeatedly used labels or phrases like “South Asian,” “Asian Indian” or “our community” as they explained the need for immigration reform. These labels highlight the implicit attempt to preserve the cultural authenticity of the group and to present themselves as separate from other immigrants and minorities. Additionally, these editorials lacked references to any other immigrant groups, and such attempt implies the group’s strategy to distance themselves from other minorities with whom they did not want to identify, for fear that such identification would decrease the status of their own ethnic group in the U.S social hierarchy.

The editorials described prospective reforms to the community members and also noting how proposed reforms would be beneficial to their community members. An editorial published in *India Bulletin*, titled “*Expectations for Comprehensive immigration reform*” (IB, 2014, January 10), explained the major provisions of the comprehensive immigration reform that was passed by the Senate in June 2013 but was stalled in the House. The editorial described that the reform proposed in both chambers had similar provisions such as,

“increased resources for border security; expanded employment eligibility verification;
increased the worksite enforcement penalties; broadened inadmissibility grounds
pertaining to national security and illegal entry and added a ground for gang
membership; expedited the implementation of the automated entry-exit system...;
broadened the categories of aliens subject to expedited removal; increased the criminal penalties for immigration and document fraud, and expanded the categories of aliens subject to mandatory detention” (IB, 2014, January 10).

The editorial noted how the reform was addressed in the two chambers, specifically explicating their approach regarding undocumented immigrants. The description explicates that the proposal would criminalize undocumented immigrants, impose stricter border control and penalties. However, the editorial does not criticize the proposition that would “broadened inadmissibility grounds” or increase “criminal penalties” and “categories of aliens subject to mandatory detention.” Instead, it continued to apply dominant logics to present such reform as required for “national security” or to curb “gang activities.” Such representational strategy of the reform suggests the newspaper’s editorial policy support the reform through dominant terms, which relate undocumented immigration to threat to national security and criminality. Additionally, the editorial specified that the failure to legislate the proposed immigration reform was due to the fact that it was perceived as the “third rail,” that is “too highly charged to touch” (IB, 2014, January 10). The editorial presented the immigration issues as sensitive. However, the editorial did not present anything about the possible outcomes if the proposal is implemented, neither did it specify how it would affect (positive or negative) the community if it is not implemented. Such strategy implies the editorial policy of remaining passive on issues instigated by the mainstream, thereby neither aligning with the mainstream ideology nor countering it.

Other editorials in IB presented its audience details of the proposed reforms noting specifically how the community members could benefit from the reforms. For example, the editorial, “Some immigrant benefits available early!” (IB, 2015, October 3), describes the change in employment based visa system, detailing that the immigrants who are already in the
U.S. now have the freedom to change employer and is entitled to travel freely. The editorial’s extensive use of phrases like “South Asian skilled workers,” “educated Indian immigrants” demonstrated the editorial policy of presenting the prospective migrants in materialistic terms, to which the community members (newspaper’s readers) could easily associate. This again can be argued to reflect an editorial policy of upholding the image of materialistically resourceful community, which is often used to claim the community’s positionality in the mainstream structured system. Typically, an editorial presents the perspective of the newspaper, and most of the editorial in Indian Bulletin simply provided information regarding documented immigration only, detailing how the documented members of the community should deal with it. It should be noted here that Indian Bulletin is a newspaper published in the Chicago area, mainly targeted towards mid-west readers. Though the area has a significant population of undocumented Asian Indian immigrants, the presence of such immigrants are seldom acknowledged.

Only one editorial (out of the 5 published on immigration reform) published after President Obama’s announcement of executive actions on immigration mentioned undocumented immigrants as it explained the proposed changes. The editorial “President Obama’s executive action plan: What it is and what you can do now” (IB, 2014, December 13) explained the details of the proposed reform and how it would affect the undocumented immigrants. The editorial noted that the “program is not amnesty; it is not a pathway to legalization or green card… what it is offering is deferred action, or protection from deportation for a period of three years.” The editorial explains that the proposed program will neither be “amnesty” nor a pathway to citizenship, such warning cautions the undocumented immigrants regarding proposed reform, thereby showing an implicit urge to prepare the undocumented community members. However, the editorial presented a general description of who should apply, who is eligible, when one can
apply, etc., if the proposed reform is implemented, and it did not refer to any specific immigrant group, neither did the editorials explicitly acknowledge undocumented immigrants as part of the Asian Indian community, instead a general image of undocumented immigrants is presented. As noted earlier this can be argued to be the editorial strategy to erase the stories of failure and instead only promote the success stories to which the readers can relate.

The editorials in India Bulletin predominantly represented documented immigration in material terms like “highly educated” “skilled.” Such representation explicates the adoption of the dominant logic where immigrants are presented in terms of their material worth. Further, the avoidance of acknowledging the presence of undocumented members within the community or lack of explicit calls for reform can be described as a strategy used by the community newspaper to avoid conflict with the mainstream, thereby an attempt to safeguard the positionality of their ethnic group within the mainstream framework.

Two significant structural characteristic of media discourse is evident in this section. First, as an editorial, it presents the official position of the newspaper on specific topics at the time of publication. Next, editorials play a significant role in constructing and shaping the readers’ perception (Shi, 2009). Therefore, when editorials appear on the most widely read and distributed Asian Indian ethnic newspaper such as India Abroad, India Bulletin, India West and India Post (Shah, 2014), it reflects how certain segments of the ethnic community (who often have privileged access and control over media discourse) construct nation and its rightful immigrants. The construction of nation and the perception of its treatment of immigrants can challenge dominant national ideology. However, close readings of the text reveal presence of competing ideologies, where some editorials challenge the dominant notion of immigration and immigrants, while a few other editorials employ the dominant image of undocumented
immigrants or definition of citizenship and as such while challenging dominant media discourse instead reinstate dominant definition of immigrants, nation and citizenship.

**Immigration reform in letters to the editor**

Letters to the editor published in all four ethnic newspapers predominantly presented pro-reform arguments. Forty letters from the four papers advocated for the rights of documented and undocumented immigrants. Only two letters published in *India Abroad* pointed out the need to protect only the valuable law abiding, taxpaying, hardworking documented members of the community and used nativist discourse to critique the undocumented immigrants. The majority of the letters described the present immigration system to be inadequate and flawed and argued for reform that would benefit both documented and undocumented immigrants (Agarwal, 2015, October 9; Bhatia, March 20, 2015; IW, 2014, April 18; Malhotra, 2015, October 16).

Letters to the editor specified the shortcomings of the present immigration system and called for a need to revamp the system. Such letters present an all-inclusive imagery of immigrants as they argue for reforms. For example, a letter published in *India West* (2014, April 18) reacting to the stalled comprehensive immigration reform specifies that “*an overwhelming and bipartisan majority of Americans including many South Asians, support an overhaul of our nation’s immigration laws in order to fix our broken system.*” The letter argues for a comprehensive immigration reform and supports its petition by noting that pro-reform stance is supported by many across the U.S. It notes that lack of immigration initiative has impacted many aspiring immigrants who are barred from accessing basic government programs and have impacted immigrants (along with South Asians) by not providing them with options to reunite with their family members. However, the explicit note that comprehensive reforms are supported by “*majority of Americans including many South Asians,*” can be argued to be community
member’s ambiguity regarding his/her positionality in the national structured system or it can also be argued to imply how South Asians are coming out to propose and support immigration laws that would benefit all immigrants. The letter, therefore, appeals for reform to fix these flaws. A few other letters similarly highlighted the need for a thoughtful immigration reform. For example, a letter published in *India West* called out to the community to support an “immigration reform that meets the needs of immigrant communities and our nation as a whole” (Bhatia, 2014, April 18). The letter calls for an inclusive reform for all immigrant communities, however, its use of the pronoun “our” implicates an apparent binary between the immigrant communities and the author who positions himself (as well as the other Asian Indian Americans) as part of the mainstream. Though these letters showed an implicit attempt by the authors to present themselves as part of the mainstream, the letters appealed for immigration reform for both documented and undocumented immigrants (Asian Indians and other immigrants) noting the need to recognize all immigrant groups.

Other letters critiqued the materialistic conditions attached with the dominant terms for immigration and pushed for a right-based argument. For example, a letter published in *IA* specifies,

“Today the clarion call is the denial of birthright citizenship of children of undocumented immigrants. Gliding on this, is there a possibility that tomorrow they go for immigrants in general just to satisfy their client-base? For the archetypal Indian immigrants (who are largely not the state welfare types) who arrive as professionals and independent business owners, this is bad news. By and large, they have been a successful set of movers of the American economy, but now there looms a possibility that relationship might be seriously threatened” (Sengupta, 2015, October 9).
The author criticizes the GOP frontrunner’s anti-reform, anti-immigrant rhetoric and specifies the need to challenge such rhetoric. Further, it calls on the Asian Indian GOP supporters warning them against supporting negative perspective. The letter to the editor, therefore, presents a counter argument to the prospective “denial of birthright citizenship of children of undocumented immigrants,” and advanced right based arguments. The letter shows its support for the undocumented immigrants while calling out to privileged Asian Indian immigrants to support the undocumented immigrants. However, in its supposed warning and apparent support the letter represents the Asian Indian community as successful “professionals and independent business owners” who are “largely not the state welfare types,” thereby not only present undocumented immigrants as a non-community problem and also creating a marked distinction between Asian Indian migrants and the undocumented immigrants.

A few letters, specified the need to unite with other immigrants in order to advocate for both documented and undocumented immigrants’ rights (Bose, 2014, December 20; Malhotra, 2015, October 16; Mehta, 2015, April 25; Shamasunder, 2015, September 4). For example, a letter in its plea for a comprehensive immigration reform describes.

*I am concerned about the direction this country is going in. It initially started with the blacks, then extended to Islamophobia and has now spread to rhetoric against Mexicans, Asians, non-Christians, etc. We Indians (Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jews, agnostics, atheists, etc) need to be careful because this hate will “bleed” into anyone who is not white (or Christian). This is not a political letter. But we can no longer stand on the sidelines”* (Malhotra, 2015, October 16).

The letter expresses concern for the increased hate rhetoric against all non-white immigrants and minorities. It listed examples of different hate crimes that happened around the country recently.
as well as his own recent experience of discrimination. The letter appeals to all Americans (specifically to Asian Indian Americans) to be intolerant to xenophobia and to speak out against those who indulge in such negative rhetoric. Additionally, the letter presents an inclusive image of immigrants and appeals to stand by them, as he notes the present anti-immigrant environment threatens the existence of people of “color,” who “continue to serve this country.” Such perspective “we can no longer stand on the sidelines” implies the presence of a progressive discourse that calls out to all immigrants as implicated by the use of “we” to stand up against nativist perspective. Another letter published in India Abroad (Bhatia, 2015, October 16) criticized the negative immigration rhetoric circulating among Republican presidential nominees and specified the need for an inclusive immigration reform for the immigrants in order to help the people who serve the nation. The letter writer used his personal experience and referred to current xenophobic incidents against community members to support his criticism. The letter, therefore, calls all immigrants to unite against such negative rhetoric and to support a comprehensive immigration reform to help protect all immigrants’ rights. But in his comment about the greater U.S. mainstream he notes, “Having said that, the majority of white Americans are good people. I have a lot of great American friends, many of whom are Republicans and I know what is happening is also unacceptable to them” (Bhatia, 2015, October 16). The author here presents a positive imagery of the mainstream, noting his and other community member’s acceptance within the mainstream structured system, and instead blames only a narrow minor segment of the U.S. as invoking negativity. Such perspective, therefore, restricts the discriminatory perspective to a few segmented sectors of the nation, thereby adapting the dominant ideology of racelessness, which denies race and discrimination.
Other letters argued that undocumented immigrants deserve citizenship because they work hard, and pay back to the community. A letter published in India Abroad specifies,

“It amuses me when I hear the words ‘illegal’ this Presidential cycle. If it is not possible to change the second amendment despite the gun-related massacres, what makes you think the 14th amendment can be changed? This kind of rhetoric is only meant to score political points with voters who hate non-European immigrants. Immigrants, the so-called ‘illegals,’ are needed to do jobs that nobody wants to do” (Agarwal, 2015, October 9).

The letter challenges the representation of undocumented immigrants as “illegal” and wrongdoer, particularly noting the fallacy surrounding the immigration debate. It specifically compares the U.S. constitutional amendments particularly questioning the second amendment and gun violence vs. 14th amendment attend to various characteristics of citizenship and the rights to citizens. Such comparison not only questions the negative rhetoric but also challenges segments within the mainstream “who hate non-European immigrants.” Instead, it argues that non-European immigrants who are often represented as “illegal,” are required and are employed to do menial jobs “that nobody wants to do.” The letter therefore presents the emergence of a progressive discourse, through which it counters segments within the mainstream, appeals to the community members, who are predominantly U.S. citizens to recognize and support the undocumented migrants’ rights, however at the same time applies dominant logics to support undocumented immigrants who do jobs “that nobody wants to do.” As such the progressive discourse failed to become a liberatory outlaw discourse as it applied dominant logic to represent the undocumented migrants.
However, two letters published in IA argued against reforms for undocumented immigrants. These letters replicated a nativist discourse in their argument. A letter protesting against a previously published pro-immigration reform letter contend,

“\textit{The author sounds more emotional than rational, does not discriminate between legal and illegal immigrants, and seems to look at the immigration issue through the lens of racism. We are a nation of immigrants, but we are also a nation of laws. I find it disappointing when politicians resort to vote bank politics by coddling illegal immigrants. The definition of ‘anchor baby’ is a child born to a noncitizen mother in a country with birthright citizenship, especially when viewed as providing an advantage to family members seeking to secure residency. I fail to see why it’s considered pejorative. What’s offensive is the illegal activity, not the terminology that is used to describe that activity. I believe we are a bit too concerned about political correctness. We even have trouble using the term ‘illegal immigrants’; we are supposed to call them ‘undocumented immigrants.’ We need to focus on plain language that everybody understands, and formulate humane, effective, and pragmatic policies that serve the interests of this country, as well as those of legal immigrants but not those of illegal immigrants. I have as much sympathy for illegal immigrants as I have for burglars, even if those illegals come from India}” (Srivastava, 2015, September, 25).

This letter used labels such as "illegal immigrants" and justifies the use of defamatory words against undocumented immigrants. It ridicules the out-lash against labels like “anchor baby” and specifies that the action should be criticized and not the phrase. Further, it calls out on the political correctness of using the phrase “undocumented” instead of “illegal.” Additionally, the letter called for stricter rules to stop illegal immigration and for promoting “humane, effective,
and pragmatic policies” for the documented immigrants. This letter represented a voice of an immigrant from India (now a U.S. citizen), who obviously occupies a privileged position in the U.S. The letter therefore, powerfully emphasized the dichotomy between individuals who are presented as socio- economically contributing and those who are perceived as not contributing and not “law-abiding,” i.e., all undocumented immigrants. By equating undocumented immigrants to burglars, the writer reiterated the dominant notion of citizenship. Similarly, the other letter as well spoke through a nativist discourse while maintaining that it is unfair to restrict rights of lawful immigrants.

The arguments in the letters to the editor presented the need for immigration reforms, where support for reform was emphasized for all immigrants, irrespective of their legal status and country of origin. A few of these calls presented immigrants as necessary for economic development of the nation. A few others critiqued materialistic terms of immigrant inclusion and instead highlighted a need to grant rights to the vulnerable immigrants. The letters also presented a need to collaborate with other immigrants to unitedly protest against xenophobia and claim for immigrants’ rights. The findings in the letters show the presence of progressive perspectives and as such selection of such letters for publication in the newspapers imply an attempt to raise awareness among the newspapers’ readers and to mobilize the readers (Asian Indian Americans) to unite with similar minded community members and stand for the rights of immigrants. However, the presence of dominant logics to represent immigrant and immigration in some of these letters shows how such arguments do not present an overall liberatory standpoint, and neither do they represent unidimensional affirming views, thereby indicating the presence of complex representation within specific socio- cultural context.
Conclusion

The arguments presented in the editorials, opinion columns and letters to the editor presented the continuous interaction between different discourses, ideology, and logics. This interaction constituted and shaped the ethnic news discourses in relation to each other. The editorials presented contending ideologies which showed that while countering dominant notion of immigration and immigrants the editorials and opinion column often used dominant logics to represent immigration, immigrants, and terms of belonging. The news editorials reflect a moral stance provoked by the anti- migrant and anti- immigration rhetoric circulating in the mainstream. However, the presence of dominant logic in their argument for reforms and their support of immigrants show why the discourses failed as vernacular outlaw discourse. Further, the simultaneous presence of protesting and confirming logic illustrates how these editorials produced complex representation within specific cultural context, was representation illustrates the power relations. Further, editorials in ethnic newspapers often reflect the opinion of an influential part of the community, therefore the similarities between the news coverage and the editorials explicate the ideologies that are prominent with the Asian Indian community. Similar to the editorials the letters to the editor presented similar trait, however, it should be noted that publication of letters typically depend on the editorial policy and therefore similar representational policy should be treated as an obvious outcome.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study examined how four Asian Indian ethnic newspaper represented national immigration reforms. Previous critical ethnic media studies that ethnic media play a central role in creating and shaping/reshaping ethnic identity, culture, and understanding of race, where they sometimes reproduce dominant ideologies and sometimes challenge them (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2009). I utilized Ono and Sloop’s (2002) framework to understand the position of discourse in relationship to other discourses (in terms of dominant ideologies) and how discourses work within and reinforce dominant logics of what makes common sense and how they challenge those logics.

This project identified the presence of three prominent discourses in the news articles’ representation of immigration reforms and immigrants. The first discourse, Economic discourse, presented immigration reform as necessary for the economic progress of the United States where the immigrants were explicitly represented in terms of economic value. The second, Humanistic discourse, argued the need for a humane, sympathetic, reform for the immigrants who are vulnerable, helpless and victims of circumstances. The third, the Model Minority discourse, showed how the newspapers constructed the Asian Indian immigrants and the other immigrants in relation to immigration reforms. These discourses interacted with each other to present the imagery of the deserving immigrant. The guiding research question for this dissertation was: What discursive strategies and logics are used to constitute immigration and immigrants in Asian Indian ethnic news discourse? Based on analysis I argue that the discourses interacted with each other in sometimes similar and/or contending discursive domain, and altered, reconstructed and reified the logics of belonging, citizenship, and nation. In this chapter, I first summarize the
strategies, arguments, and logics used in the news discourses. Based on the analysis, I develop the subsequent theoretical claims. First, emphasizing the need for a critical approach to ethnic media study, I argue that for a group that has been historically ambiguously included in the U.S. national imagery, it is necessary to recognize the constitutive function of context and history in their construction of citizenship, nationhood and rights. I posit that histories, experiences, material conditions, and social relations play a major role in their contestations and struggles over issues of belonging and ethnic rights, which in turn shapes their ethnic media representation. Second, I argue ethnic media should not be considered simply as alternate to mainstream, instead ethnic media research should focus on the underlying logics that guide ethnic media discourses. While the ethnic newspapers included opposing views on belonging and rights, the underlying logics can reify the dominant logics of nation and national belonging, as news discourses at times can be more resistant than complicit and at times more complicit than resistant to dominant ideas and dominant logics. This is because it suggests a continuous move between Ono and Sloop’s (2002) suggested quadrant, portraying that an outlaw discourse fails to become an outlaw vernacular discourse as it does not gain universal interest instead it becomes outlaw civic discourse (part of a dominant discourse) as it loses its resistant potential to the prevalent discourse. Finally, I argue for associating ethnic media studies with that of critical intercultural communication theories as it will help realize how non-white immigrant groups participate in actively constructing and reconstructing meanings that are presented to them through competing ideologies.

**Summary of findings - News Articles**

The findings show that the newspaper articles supported immigration reforms. This finding was neither predictable nor did it come as a surprise as based on Ono and Sloop’s
framework ethnic news discourse or vernacular discourses that materialize from self-identified smaller marginalized communities that exist within the large civic community, can either present an outlaw logic or a dominant logic. As the four ethnic newspapers negotiated the cultural logics of citizenship, nationhood, and rights, they presented different and sometimes contending logics as they constituted the image of their community members and other immigrants in relation to the reforms. It should be mentioned here that in their pro-reform arguments the newspapers made clear distinction between documented and undocumented immigrants. This section will review the research results detailing the arguments that constituted the above-mentioned discourses.

The first discourse portrays the *Economic Discourse* that presented immigration reforms as necessary to the nation and presented the immigrants as vital to the economy. The findings show several discursive strategies constituted the dominant Economic discourse; They are *Arguments for undocumented immigrants, Arguments for documented immigrants,* and *Represented voices.*

The arguments presented immigration reforms as crucial for the U.S economic growth. In particular, the proposed executive reforms for undocumented immigrants were hailed as a positive step towards implementing a system that would aid the economic progress. Also, anti-reform arguments and perspective were critiqued emphasizing the need for reforms for U.S. economic interests. Undocumented immigrants in these arguments were presented as crucial labor force for the economy. Therefore, the newspapers argued the need to support undocumented immigrants. As otherwise there will be no one to do the menial jobs, that supports the nation’s economic infrastructure. While some of the arguments supported the temporary provision (proposed in the DACA and DAPA executive reforms), others supported a path to
legalization emphasizing the need for rights for undocumented immigrants. However, undocumented immigrants were represented as valuable hard working laborers, who are argued to deserve rights because of their economic contribution. These findings support the notion that ethnic newspapers often present issues not covered in mainstream, such as immigrant rights (Matsaganis et al., 2011), however, the analysis shows that dominant economic logics are applied in the call for reforms for undocumented immigrants.

News articles also presented economic need argument in their pro-reform claims for documented immigrants. These arguments presented reforms as essential to retain the highly educated and skilled immigrants. Support for a pathway to citizenship for such immigrants was also emphasized, highlighting how losing such highly educated and skilled labors would affect the U.S economy. The reforms were suggested as methods to sustain international market competition. Similar to undocumented immigrants, here as well the migrants were represented as valuable labor force essential for the U.S. to compete internationally.

The pro-reform arguments for documented and undocumented immigration were predominantly presented through elite voices (national and community elites). As ethnic media scholars have noted, often ethnic media represent prominent elite voices to set and change the agenda of community discourse. Therefore, representation of such voices implies such strategy, where elite voices are used to reiterate the terms and criteria of acceptance.

The economic discourse present immigration reform as an economic need where the immigrants (both documented and undocumented) were represented in terms of their economic value. As such applying capitalistic logic these arguments position the immigrants within the capitalistic system. However, simultaneously call for rights for immigrants (temporary legal rights and pathway to citizenship) highlight the importance given to the need to recognize these
migrants. Following Ono and Sloop’s (2002) logic of discourse, I argue that this illustrates the complexities of discourses, where though the call for rights in the economic discourse suggests an apparent progressive discourse, the alignment with dominant logic of immigrant acceptance and belonging represent a failed attempt to change dominant perspective. Mapping the news discourse in Ono and Sloop’s framework, it shows the apparent presence of dominant vernacular discourse, as findings explicated that the economic (vernacular) discourses were more aligned with dominant logics of judgment than challenging these logics. This implies that though vernacular dominant discourse in itself is regarded to perform various roles such as, addressing issues not presented in the mainstream, portraying the ways apparent alternate voices present logics, vernacular dominant discourse should not be assumed as a simple project that dynamically changes dominant discourse.

The second major discourse, the Humanistic Discourse, also presented immigration reform as necessary for both documented and undocumented immigrants. However, these arguments showed sympathy and concern for the immigrants who are represented as helpless, powerless, desperate, and victims of circumstances. Findings show that the following discursive strategies constituted the humanistic discourse; Representation of undocumented immigrants and Representation of documented immigrants.

Some of the pro-reform arguments for undocumented immigrants personalized the plight of the migrants who struggle with economic injustices, inequalities, and fears of deportation. These arguments used emotional vocabulary and imagery to call out to community members to sympathize with immigrants who are deprived of basic human rights. A few of these appeals represented voices of undocumented migrants and their advocate narrating stories of their
struggle, while others used prominent voices to invite a sympathetic reaction from the community members.

Humanistic appeals were also presented in calls for reform for the documented migrants. Such pleas urged the need to recognize the emotional and economic sufferings of spouses of high-skilled immigrants, who did not have work authorization in the U.S. The news articles used personal stories to present these undocumented immigrants as victims of the system. These discursive strategies justified the need for a humane immigration system for the documented migrants.

The humanistic discourse presented a competing perspective when compared to the economic discourse. The analysis shows that ethnic news discourse often presented conflicting values and positions. This is because Ono and Sloop’s framework helps to identify humanistic discourse as an outlaw vernacular discourse (humanistic discourse) an apparent shift in quadrant as the news discourse shows a movement from a dominant vernacular (economic discourse) to an outlaw vernacular discourse. While a few news stories predominantly quoted or paraphrased activists and immigrant advocates to argue for a comprehensive immigration reform for all immigrants (documented and undocumented), whereas in a few other more prominence was given to legal immigrants by foregrounding arguments in their favor compared to undocumented immigrants. I argue that the strategic use of humanistic appeals calling for sympathy for both documented and undocumented immigrants implies the emergence of a progressive discourse. Though the presented appeals and strategies varied based on the localized context (the geopolitical area the newspaper served), this discourse presented judgment and sympathy as an essential resource for engagement with migrants.
The final prominent discourse, the *Model Minority Discourse* was widely prominent in the newspapers construction of their community members and other immigrant and minority communities in relation to the proposed reforms. This discourse was presented separately alongside *Economic* and *Humanistic* discourse as it shows the presence of both economic and humanistic construct and particularly exemplifies the presence of both dominant vernacular and outlaw vernacular discourses or in other words complicit and resistant meanings. Findings show that intergroup dynamics were widely evident in the representational strategies of the four newspapers. While news articles published in *India Bulletin* and *India Post* seldom presented or constructed any commonalities with other immigrants or minorities articles published in *India Abroad* and *India West* portrayed an inclusive imagery of immigrants as they argued for a need to implement sensible immigration reforms for all immigrants. Based on this difference in the localized contexts this discourse was constituted differently, thereby the subdivided categories were *Representation of immigrants in India Bulletin & India Post*, *Representation of immigrants in India Abroad & India West*, and *Countering the myth of model minority*.

Findings show that two newspapers *India Bulletin* and *India Post* separated out Asian Indians in their call for reforms. These pro-reform arguments explicitly named their community while completely erasing references to any other immigrant groups. Such strategy can be argued to imply the group’s propensity to present themselves as distinct from other immigrant groups.

The other two newspaper *India Abroad* and *India West* acknowledged the presence of other immigrant groups and minorities. These arguments presented commonality with other immigrant presenting immigration reforms as the remedy as it would provide the marginalized (often silenced) immigrants their basic human rights. However, contending perspectives were
also present within these two newspapers, where the hegemonic belief of model minority was favored.

A few articles in India Abroad, India Post, and India West presented arguments that critiqued the dominant belief of model minority. These arguments justify that Asian Indians often relate undocumented immigration to criminality, therefore, they are hesitant in acknowledging undocumented migration as their own community problem, instead, they relate such issues as prominent among a few other immigrant groups. The arguments also warn about the negative effects of the model minority belief (cultural exceptionalism) and how it undermines the struggles of the marginalized members of the community.

The news discourses presented conflicting ideologies and positions in their pro-reform arguments and their representation their own ethnic group and other immigrant groups. Analysis of the news articles shows repeated use of a few words and phrases in their pro-reform argument. Words or phrases like “need help,” “need relief,” and need to be “taken care off” were recurrently used to present a particular view of immigration reform typically to call for welfare for the immigrants. Simultaneous use of such phrases with the need for immigration reform argument and lack of explicit reference to any particular ethnic group constructs immigration reform as beneficial to immigrants in general. However, at the same time a few news articles in their pro-reform also restored the dominant notions of representing their ethnic community as monolithic thereby erasing race, class-based discrimination and instead reinstating the dominant definition of their group.

Summary of findings- Editorials, Opinion Column and Letters to the Editor

Editorials, opinion column and letters to the editor demonstrated similar patterns as the news articles in their pro-reform arguments. Findings show that the editorials in the newspapers
also emphasized the need for reforms for both documented and undocumented immigrants. The editorials performed the role of educator detailing the proposed immigration initiatives, explaining how the immigrants should prepare and approach the initiatives if implemented and how in general other additional initiatives could benefit the immigrants. Such strategies were prominent across all newspapers, however, editorials in India Bulletin explicitly mentioned their own community as they detailed the benefits of the proposed reforms or called for the need for other immigration initiatives. Editorials in the other newspapers presented the need for reform for immigrants (their community members and other immigrants), where a few emphasized more on documented immigration. In the case of undocumented though a few of the editorials in their pro-reform arguments presented dominant logics of rights and belongings (labeling them as laborers necessary for the economy) others called out against the criminalization of the undocumented immigrants. The analysis of the editorials showed the presence of competing ideologies, where some challenge the dominant conception of immigration and immigrants, while others engaged the dominant notion of nation and citizenship.

The analysis shows that the letters to the editor published in all the four ethnic newspapers also presented pro-reform arguments. The majority of the letters supported the need for reforms for both documented and undocumented immigrants while critiquing the present system as flawed. Only a couple of letters exclusively advocated for the rights of law-abiding legal immigrants simultaneously using nativist discourse to describe the undocumented immigrants. The findings suggest a progressive attempt on part of the newspapers to publish letters that challenge the dominant perspective. I argue that such a strategy implies an attempt to raise awareness among community members (the news readers) to mobilize and fight for the rights of the immigrants.
Logics

Ono and Sloop (2002) describe that logics of discourse are the meanings, reasoning, and arguments that guide discourses. Findings show that the strategies of the three prominent discourses worked on the basis of the logics of capitalism, which included logics of economics, logics of national belonging or acceptance; and logics of common humanity, which included the logic of commonness; and finally the logics of community solidarity. These logics of discourse helped to distinguish whether the discourses reify the same cultural logics and goals or challenge dominant ideology.

The analysis of economic discourse demonstrated that the discourse was predominantly constructed through an economic need argument. This economic need argument for reforms widely applied capitalistic logic in the construction of undocumented immigrants, where such immigrants were presented as a vital workforce. However, detailed analysis shows the presence of competing logics of economics where one constructed undocumented immigrants as deserving, therefore need adequate compensation whereas the other marked them as menial labors thereby requiring a minimum payment. The arguments also represented the documented immigrants in terms of their economic value, positioning them within the capitalistic system. As capitalist logic establishes the value of commodities in markets, these immigrants are presented through their economic worth. However, at the same time call for their rights signify the need to recognize the contribution of the community members. Though the news discourse presented a pro-reform argument for both documented and undocumented immigrants, it should be noted here that portrayal of documented immigrants varied widely from the portrayal of undocumented immigrants in material terms, where documented immigrants were primarily represented as “educated” and “highly skilled.” Additionally, documented immigrants were mainly presented as
members of their own community or prospective immigrants from India, whereas undocumented immigrants were presented either as a homogenized entity or in some cases as migrants from South or Central America. Findings show that by applying dominant logics of capitalism the ethnic newspapers not only urge community members (many of whom are U.S citizens or legal resident) to support deserving immigrants similar to them, who claimed their belonging through material terms it further reaffirms dominant terms of belonging and acceptance. This is because such calls were loaded with “logics of capital” (Ono & Sloop, 2002, p. 32) a predominant ideology that exists in a capitalistic society such as the United States.

The analysis of humanistic discourse demonstrated that the discourse was predominantly constructed through a logic of common humanity, which further utilized the logic of commonness and logic of solidarity. This logic of commonness presented immigrants as similar to the readers engaging in similar daily activities, family rituals, family relations, hope and aspiration for family members, anxiety and fear regarding family members to invite sympathetic reaction from the readers for the undocumented immigrants who share similar family bonding. However, such logics were limited to news published in India Abroad. Other newspapers though called for a sympathetic reaction from the readers they emphasized more on documented immigrants, where again logics of economics were prominent, and empathy was more prominent in the case of undocumented immigrants instead of sympathy. Additionally, the newspapers (except India Abroad) in their strategic representation utilized the logic of common humanity as the moral justification to act upon the people who are vulnerable, exploited and are suffering. However, such logics working in conjunction with economic and capitalistic logic invoke empathy (by constructing an imaginative world) instead of sympathy, and as such failed to become a progressive discourse.
In their representation of their community, the model minority discourse presented dominant logics of solidarity, cohesion, and self-reliance, which reinstated the belief that the model immigrants depend on themselves and on each other for their advancement. Such logics predominantly used economic and materialistic logic to present immigrants (both documented and undocumented) and at times used logics of common humanity to present immigrants, which countered the capitalistic logic and the materialistic representation of immigrants.

Findings show precisely the dynamic nature of immigration discourse, where strategies and logics at times imply the presence of a progressive discourse countering the dominant logics, and a few others though on the surface appear to counter dominant perception, utilize dominant logics of immigrant acceptance or immigration. This particularly represented the fluidity of vernacular discourses, as it identifies vernacular discourse that is non-dominant to and vernacular discourse that is complicit with dominant civic discourse. This also explicates the movement of vernacular outlaw and vernacular dominant discourse, within Ono and Sloop’s proposed quadrants. In particular, when a vernacular discourse applies a different logic (non-dominant) arguing the need to sympathize on a humanistic ground, it shows a movement from dominant to outlaw, and when claims for rights are based on an economic construct it shows alignment with dominant logic, thereby a movement in the quadrant. The shifts explicate the power dynamics within vernacular discourse as it stays within the dominant logic while challenging dominant judgments and their effort to bring out and urge judgments by outlaw logics. As implicated these strategies and logics worked in tandem throughout the different discourses to argue for the deserving immigrant, therefore on the basis of these results, I advance some theoretical claims and future directions of research.

**Theoretical Claims**
Scholarship on ethnic media has predominantly conceived ethnic newspapers as alternate media, however, critical media scholars in their comparison of ethnic media and mainstream media (particularly focusing on the production of meanings) have conceived ethnic media as an ideological apparatus (Molina Guzman, 2006; Shi, 2005, 2009). My findings add to this line of research, where I argue the need for that ethnic media studies to focus on the understanding the underlying logics, ideologies that guide the discursive strategy. Therefore, I advance the following claims on the basis of my results. First, I argue that ethnic media should not be considered as an alternate, where it is assumed that they present views not accounted in the mainstream. Instead I argue, ethnic media can sometimes reiterate dominant ideology, or can at times present other non-dominant ideology, specifically because representation in ethnic media is shaped by the context, historical experience as an immigrant group and their experience with the intergroup power relations.

My analysis found that the newspapers predominantly argued for immigration reforms for both documented and undocumented immigrants. However, such arguments used different sometimes conflicting discourses as they argued for reforms and claimed for rights. Across the four newspapers, local demographic context played an important role in shaping the socially constructed borders of the imagined community (Anderson, 1991), and in identifying who is included and excluded in the imagined community. For example, the newspaper India Abroad is the oldest published Asian Indian newspaper in the U.S. It is circulated from New York area, which has the oldest Asian Indian settlements in the United States. However, according to a report published by Pew Research Center (Passel & Cohn, 2014, November 18), New York state has the largest number of undocumented immigrants. Further, prominent Asian Indian immigration advocacy groups and civil rights advocacy groups also have their headquarters in
that area. These organizations provide a “critical space” (Das Gupta, 2006, p. 61) for migrants who stories do not match the Asian Indian mainstream narrative of the model minority. Further, these organizations not only provide alternative cultural discourses to the undocumented migrants they also claim the migrants as part of the Asian Indian communities. The news discourse shows that the negotiation of these advocacy groups and the Asian Indian mainstream have in some way helped to reconstruct community, which now to a certain extent incorporate different subject who have a different class, position, and interest. This is particularly evident in the newspapers’ use of personalized story, sympathetic narrative to claim for rights for these immigrants. The other newspapers India West and India Post are published from the Bay area and Atlanta area respectively, which has a greater number of documented immigrants (Census, 2010). India Bulletin is published from the Chicago area. However, though that area has the second highest population of undocumented immigrants in the U.S., there was very less coverage of such immigrants in the newspaper. Instead, they use personal stories and emotional narrative to appeal for and to represent documented migration. This apparent erasure of undocumented immigrants can be argued to be an attempt to represent their community positively, by using an image that would continue to uphold the image of a successful model minority.

Further, as the ethnic newspapers included opposing views on belonging and rights, the dominant imagery was strategically used to affirm their community's position within the imagined nation. It can be argued that as many of the recent (post-1965) immigrants did not witness the pre- civil rights era or pre- Indian independence racial discrimination, they fail to see the racial injustices against communities of color. Further, segments of Asian Indian immigrants who had privileged terms of entry based on their high level of education and skills quickly adapted the model minority image. The model minority, therefore, became the dominating
narrative that circulates within the Asian Indian immigrant communities, which they strategically used to distance themselves from other not so successful immigrants and minorities. As such alignment with the dominant ideology helped the Asian Indian immigrants in their upward mobility and entry into the mainstream structure, and therefore they continue to promote dominant terms of belonging to reaffirm their positionality within the dominant structured system.

Second, emphasizing the need for a critical approach to ethnic media study, I argue that it is necessary to recognize the constitutive function of context and history in their construction of immigrants and immigrant rights. I posit that histories, experiences, material conditions, and social relations play a major role in the contestations and struggles over issues of belonging and ethnic rights, which consequently shapes media representation of ethnic terms of belongings and rights.

The Asian Indian immigrants are a recent group of migrants compared to the other immigrants in the U.S., who predominantly came in after the 1965 immigration reforms. Scholars explained that the post-1965 immigrants were the cream in their countries of origin, and were perceived as beneficial to the United States as they brought along knowledge and skills with them. Due to their advantaged terms of entry, these immigrants were incorporated into an infrastructure that automatically placed them at higher strata, while at the same time it excluded other immigrants or minorities who were at (or came to join) the bottom layers of the labor market (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). With other minorities at the bottom, the immigrants realized that they were not only able to secure higher positionality, but they also perceived possibilities of upward mobilization by preserving the positive identity and practicing discrimination against 'other' minorities (Prashad, 2000; Rudrappa, 2004, Das Gupta, 2006). Therefore, as the
immigrants entered the racially structured system they rationalized their privileged position by affirming negative imagery to other minorities, and at the same time they distanced themselves from other minorities and immigrants by strategically positioning themselves both materially and symbolically as a better fit for “Americanness.” Even though recent changes in immigration laws have increased have demographically diversified the immigrant group, the findings suggest a strategic attempt by the newspapers to hold on to their positionality and image. A recent report published by Pew Research Center (Passel & Cohn, 2014, November 18), shows that Asian Indians are the largest group of undocumented Asian Americans, comprising of around 450,000 or 4 percent of the total number of undocumented population in the United States. However, findings show the continued dominance of the model minority image in some of the newspapers, where news articles and editorials either did not explicitly acknowledge the presence of undocumented immigrants within the community and presented “illegality” as a problem specific to certain other communities like South and Central American immigrants. Therefore, it can be argued that as the privileged segments of the Asian Indian community (who are predominantly the newspaper readers) are apprehensive about maintaining their racial privileges in the U.S. social hierarchy, such strategy is adopted by the newspapers. Further, findings also showed that newspapers continued presenting immigration and immigrants through materialistic terms, which signifies the historical precedence of the community members, who mainly came in through such terms of entry. Therefore, such claims of reform can be argued to be more relatable to the readers and can have more effect in terms of mobilizing their support for reforms. Based on such argument I argue the importance of considering histories, experiences, material conditions, and social relations of an ethnic group in order to understand their claims for belonging and ethnic rights.
Finally, I argue that associating ethnic media studies with that of critical intercultural communication theories help comprehend how non-white immigrant groups participate in actively constructing and reconstructing meanings that are presented to them through competing ideologies. The analysis shows that for a non-white group like the Asian Indians, who continue to negotiate their positionality in the U.S. structured system, certain issues, like immigration reforms can incite ethnic newspapers to represent in an alternate way. However, the ideological relationship between the mainstream and ethnic community play a prominent role in defining discourses of citizenship, and community in ethnic media discourses. Scholars have noted (Das Gupta, 2006; Prashad, 200; Rudrappa, 2004) that Asian Indians hold on to the model minority image to represent their community as retaining ethnic identity and at the same time integrating (somewhat) into the U.S. material structures. Therefore, ethnic newspapers alignment with dominant logic shows at attempt to represent themselves as ideal. However, at the same time, the presence of outlaw logics shows the newspapers’ fluid movement between different ideologies as they continue to negotiate their community’s positionality with the mainstream structured system.

**Future research**

The study opened up the possibilities for future studies on ethnic media featuring new forms of an agency of ethnic groups in a global context. With the rise of ethnic population in the U.S., specifically non-white groups like the Asian Indians it becomes necessary to understand how these groups negotiate other emerging issues like social justice and rights in terms of immigrant’s access to health care, access to social welfare etc., which are increasingly becoming vital issues in the context of the U.S.

This study to some extent demonstrated the importance of dimensions such as education, occupation, and socio-economic class, in the ethnic media representation. Further, based on the
internal heterogeneity within the community in terms of language, class, gender, future research should also attempt to study immigration and other emerging issues presented in newspapers published in the community’s ethnic languages (non-English). This would help to realize the difference or similarities of news representation in non-English language media. Further, it would open up the possibility of a comparative study between English language ethnic news representation on a specific issue and its representation in other ethnic languages.

**Post study Self-Reflexivity**

I started this project with mixed feelings regarding the Asian Indian immigrant community. As an insider (a privileged Asian Indian immigrant), I was perplexed with my acquaintances’ denial of race and class-based distinctions. However, such description did not match my encountered discrimination and alienation from the mainstream. This experience made me more critical, during my analysis of the media discourses. My analysis revealed different conflicting ideologies and positions as the discourses presented their own ethnic group and other immigrant groups. When I encountered few of the progressive discourse in my analysis, I went back to my data to reconfirm whether my findings. As I delved into the data more, I realized the dynamic nature of discourses and the fluidity of the concepts such as citizenship, nation and how context and historicization shape discursive strategies. This knowledge that I have developed from this study will help me to promote the need to be critical of ethnic media instead of simply presenting it as an apparent alterity. Additionally, this awareness will allow me to comprehend alternate voices in contending discourses particularly questioning what issues are being countered, whose interest is being presented in such discourse, whose interest is being served (to what degree). Such attempt will also successfully help identify the often suppressed alternate discourse that challenges dominant ideology and fight for rights of all marginalized groups.
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